

## Accountability Report Transmittal Form

Agency Name: South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium

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P26 - South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium

## FY2011-12 State Accountability Report

Submitted September 17, 2012



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## **Section I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1. Mission, Vision, and Values**

The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium (hereinafter referred to as the Consortium), created in 1978 by the S.C. General Assembly, has as its purpose the management and administration of the Sea Grant Program and related activities to support, improve, and share research, education, training, and advisory services in fields related to ocean and coastal resources. The Consortium's unique mission is to generate and provide science-based information to enhance the practical use and conservation of coastal and marine resources that fosters a sustainable economy and environment. The Consortium vision is to be the best Sea Grant Program in the Nation, and one of the most efficiently and effectively managed state agencies in South Carolina. The agency modified its motto to now be *Coastal Science Serving South Carolina*, reflecting the fact that the issues we address and the work we do touches the lives of all South Carolinians, not just those who live along the coast. A link to the agency's FY10-13 strategic and implementation plan, titled *The Changing Face of Coastal South Carolina: Valuing Resources – Adapting to Change*, can be found at [http://www.scseagrant.org/pdf\\_files/SCSGC\\_Strat\\_Plan\\_2010-13.pdf](http://www.scseagrant.org/pdf_files/SCSGC_Strat_Plan_2010-13.pdf).

The Consortium develops and supports balanced and integrated research, education, extension, and communication programs for South Carolina which seek to provide for future economic opportunities, improve the social well-being of its citizens, and ensure the wise use and development of its marine and coastal natural resources. It administers an effective and efficient outreach network among academia, business, government, and the general public to ensure that Consortium activities are responsive to marine and coastal stakeholders and that information generated is delivered in a useful and timely fashion. The Consortium is part of a nationwide network of 32 Sea Grant Programs that report to the National Sea Grant College Program, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce; thus, Consortium activities are responsive to regional and national needs, as well as to those of South Carolina. The Consortium is unique among Sea Grant programs nationally in that it is an academically based independent state agency.

The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium has established a set of values which serve as the foundation upon which its operating principles are built; they are essential for successful performance. The Consortium values trust, honesty, and respect, which are critical for productive business practices, both throughout the agency and in working with researchers, partners, and constituents; integrity and objectivity of our program activities including exemplary scientists who provide science-based information of the utmost credibility and integrity; and excellence in quality of work, an emphasis on teamwork and partnerships, and efficient delivery of information that takes a non-advocacy approach.

### **2. Major Achievements/Activities**

The Consortium's ability to achieve its mission and goals is dependent upon four major factors: (1) state appropriations, which provide the administrative and management foundation for Consortium efforts and activities; (2) extramural funding, secured through competitive grants and contracts, to support stakeholder-driven coastal and marine research, education, and extension program activities that benefit the citizens of South Carolina and the region; (3) a well-trained and experienced staff to effectively develop and manage its programs and the information



that derives from this work; and (4) a dynamic agency strategic plan – a living document – that incorporates elements related to outcomes, performance measures, and metrics, and is flexible enough to adapt and address changing needs.

**Consortium's Return on Investment to the State of South Carolina.** The Consortium has been able to increase its ROI on the State of South Carolina investment despite recent state budget reductions. We submit that this trend is not sustainable, however.

<i>FISCAL YEAR</i>	<i>STATE</i>	<i>NON-STATE</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>RETURN ON INVESTMENT</i>
2007-08	\$ 615,836	\$4,177,769	\$4,793,605	<b>678%</b>
2008-09	\$ 444,756	\$3,227,636	\$3,672,392	<b>726%</b>
2009-10	\$ 405,460	\$3,621,363	\$4,026,823	<b>993%</b>
2010-11	\$ 360,134	\$4,604,549	\$4,964,683	<b>1278%</b>
2011-12	\$ 332,223	\$3,462,152	\$3,794,375	<b>1142%</b>

**Results of the National Sea Grant External Site Visit Evaluation.** The Consortium is recognized nationally as one of the premier Sea Grant College Programs in the United States. An external National Sea Grant Site Team evaluated the Consortium on September 21-22, 2010, and highly commended the agency for its effective management and organization; creativity; stakeholder engagement; collaborative networking; local, state, regional, and national leadership; ability to leverage resources and funding; and interactions with the private sector. The Team had no recommendations for program improvement.

**Program Highlights.** The Consortium has worked diligently to enhance its statewide and regional research and outreach program efforts through large-scale grant funding and small-scale partnership efforts; the following reflect a very limited sampling of these activities:

- The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium is a member of the South Carolina Regulatory Task Force (RTF) for Coastal Clean Energy, established through the South Carolina Energy Office with U.S. Department of Energy funding. As part of its role, the RTF was charged by the Wind Energy Production Farms Feasibility Study Committee, established by the South Carolina General Assembly, to, in part, explore the establishment of a leasing framework for offshore coastal ocean activities in state waters. The Consortium's Executive Director (DeVoe) was asked to chair a working group to examine the elements of a proposed leasing system for state waters, and over the course of nine months, developed a series of recommended components of such a leasing system. Discussions are currently underway to fine-tune the recommendations and package them for consideration by state leaders.
- The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium is actively involved with the Governors' South Atlantic Alliance ([www.southatlanticalliance.org](http://www.southatlanticalliance.org)), formally established by the Governors of FL, GS, S.C., and N.C. on October 19, 2009 at an official ceremony in Charleston, S.C. The Consortium Executive Director (DeVoe) is a member of the GSAA Executive Planning Team's Leadership Group which is directly regional alliance activities. In Fall 2010, the Consortium was selected by the GSAA to temporarily serve as its administrative and fiscal agent, and the Consortium developed, maintains, and hosts the GSAA's Web site. In December 2010, the Consortium submitted, on behalf of the GSAA, two proposals to NOAA



in response to its FFO for regional ocean partnership and coastal and ocean planning development. In January 2012, the Consortium and the GSAA were informed that funding of \$270,000 for one year efforts to develop the alliance, and \$784,000 for coastal and ocean planning efforts. Indeed, the GSAA was one of only three regions in the nation to receive programmatic (planning) funding.

- The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium was recognized in March 2012 by the Sea Grant Association, a non-profit, university based organization dedicated to furthering the Sea Grant program concept, for its long-standing commitment to Sea Grant and the Sea Grant Association, and was presented with the SGA partnership Award.
- Rick DeVoe, Executive Director of the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium, was selected as one of only nine representatives of the Governors' South Atlantic Alliance to attend the invitation-only National Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Workshop, sponsored by the National Ocean Council and held in Washington, DC on June 21-23, 2011.

### **3. Key Strategic Goals**

The goal of the Consortium's strategic planning process is to maximize the ability of S.C. Sea Grant's research, education, and outreach programs to address the coastal resource needs of South Carolina. To this end, the Consortium's legislative mandate identifies the following three strategic goals which provide the foundation for future Sea Grant activities.

1. To provide a mechanism for the development and management of the Sea Grant Program for the State of South Carolina and adjacent regions which share a common environment and resource heritage.
2. To support, improve and share research, education, training and advisory services in fields related to ocean and coastal resources.
3. To encourage and follow a regional approach to solving problems or meeting needs relating to ocean and coastal resources in cooperation with appropriate institutions, programs, and persons in the region.

The Consortium is currently in the process of revising its FY10-13 strategic and implementation plan for FY14-17 as required by the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program Office. Since the agency only recently completed a revision of its current plan (in FY10), the FY14-17 plan will represent an update and strategic revision of our current plan, as many of the issues and opportunities identified in 2010 have yet to be completely addressed.

### **4. Key Strategic Challenges**

As noted in previous reports, coastal growth and continual change continues to remain a primary natural resource management issue for the state into the foreseeable future. The challenges faced by South Carolina's coastal and inland communities in managing this growth and ensuring economic opportunity, conserving our coastal and marine resources, and enhancing the quality of life for South Carolina citizens are immense. More recent pressures have been mounting to utilize the resources of the state's coastal ocean region which extends out from the state's shoreline. The need to comprehensively identify and map our marine resources, document existing uses, improve the health of the state's fisheries, protect the state's people and infrastructure from increasingly severe coastal storms and hurricanes, plan for the possibility that



energy development will occur off our coastline, ensure that coastal communities have the ability to adapt to climate change and sea level rise, continue to build public awareness and enhance the scientific literacy of the state's citizenry, and train our students to fill the needs of our state and regional workforce are becoming more critical each day.

The S.C. General Assembly's commitment to and support of the Consortium over the last three decades, for which we are most grateful, has allowed the agency to successfully compete for non-state funding. However, only 9.6 percent of its budget currently comes from state appropriations. While the diverse constituencies of the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium have benefited from the agency's long-term non-state budgetary growth to support relevant research, education, and extension programming, state support is critically important to the agency in order to sustain a minimum required level of administrative, planning, and program management effort; to provide office space, to support its ever-increasing fiduciary responsibilities in program coordination, fiscal management, and constituent support; and to handle the rapidly growing public demand for Consortium products, services, and activities. The Consortium had to lay-off four state-supported staff (of the seven state FTEs it has) over the past three years, which has placed the Consortium in a very tenuous position in terms of meeting its obligations regarding grant management; a position that is not sustainable beyond this next fiscal year.

The FY11-12 fiscal year was made more challenging due to the fact that the agency's full budget was vetoed by the Governor. Although the veto was overwhelming overridden by both houses of the S.C. General Assembly, the Consortium's FY11-12 final state appropriation (\$332,223) reached its lowest level in its 32-year history.

At the national level, the availability of extramural funding available through competitive research and outreach opportunities is becoming increasingly limited, given the significant reduction in discretionary spending appropriated by the U.S. Congress. This situation has heightened the need for the Consortium to pursue funding opportunities from alternative sources, such as foundations, the private sector, and individuals. The Consortium Board of Directors has charged the Agency Head and staff with developing strategies to diversify the Consortium's program funding base. But this is becoming increasingly difficult with a shrinking staff and increasing reporting and evaluation requirements.

## **5. Improvements Emanating from Accountability Reporting**

The State Accountability Report is but one of three major annual reports the Consortium is required to prepare each year (the others are required by our federal sponsors). Information presented in the State Accountability Report is used to meet these other reporting requirements, and vice versa. However, due to the nature of the Consortium's mission and role, a number of the metrics that this report mandates cannot easily be addressed by the agency, primarily because it deals with the development and support of scientific research and discovery and the delivery of the resultant information to its constituencies. Successful outcomes of Consortium efforts cannot be measured like "widgets" from a factory, but are being tracked by documenting changes in policy, management, and behavior. Of course, these are more qualitative than quantitative, and are extremely difficult to measure. As a result, the Consortium tracks many of its "successes" through the use of testimonials, documentation of success stories, and the support that it receives from its constituents.





## **Section II: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE**

### **1. Main Products and Services**

The Consortium's major products and services fall into the following categories:

- *Marine and coastal research and education programs* that generate and deliver applied and objective science-based information to: (1) inform individuals, businesses, local and state government, and other organizations about the nature of coastal and ocean ecosystems; (2) the value of balanced use and conservation of coastal and ocean resources; (3) enhance public safety and minimize structural and natural resource losses that occur as a result of natural (e.g., hurricanes) and anthropogenic (e.g., algal blooms) events; and (4) provide economic opportunities through increased revenues and jobs created and/or cost savings and jobs retention to business and industry.
- *Extension, service, and technical assistance activities* (e.g., workshops, seminars, constituent meetings) focusing on environmental/water quality issues, coastal community development, coastal processes (e.g., beach erosion, shoreline change), coastal hazards, climate change and sea level rise, aquaculture and fisheries, and science literacy and workforce development.
- *Communications products* that inform and educate citizens and targeted audiences about the issues relevant to how the state's coastal, marine, and ocean resources and historical and cultural heritage affect the quality of life of all South Carolinians (e.g., *Coastal Heritage* magazine).
- *Community-based volunteerism*, through marine litter and habitat restoration projects (e.g., Beach Sweep/River Sweep).

### **2. Key Customer Groups and Their Requirements and Expectations**

The Consortium serves many constituencies through the provision of information and funding (see Appendix 1). The Consortium's constituencies look to the agency as a source of objective, science-based information on coastal and marine resource issues and opportunities. In general, the Consortium serves:

- Faculty, staff, and students of our eight member institutions
- Federal, state, and local natural resource and economic development agencies
- Institutions and individuals involved in management of coastal and marine resources
- State and local government officials and community leaders
- K-12 teachers and students
- Informal educational institutions (e.g., aquaria, museums, etc.)
- Non-governmental organizations
- Business and industry
- Citizen groups
- General public

### **3. Key Stakeholder Groups**

The Consortium interacts and collaborates with (and serves) a diverse number of stakeholders in conducting its programs and activities. A selected listing of the agency's program partners and collaborators can also be found in Appendix 1.





#### **4. Key Suppliers and Partners**

The Consortium depends on the expertise and knowledge of the faculty, staff, and students of its eight member institutions, as well as its own professional staff, to generate, translate, and deliver pertinent coastal and marine resource-related information to its constituents. It also depends on the success of the competitive proposals it prepares and/or submits on behalf of its member institutions to secure the financial resources necessary to support the myriad of activities – identified by our stakeholders – with which it is engaged. Ninety-one (91) percent of the Consortium’s budget is obtained from extramural sources, such as federal agencies, including the NOAA National Ocean Service (including its Coastal Services Center and National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science), NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, the National Science Foundation, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; a number of state agencies such as S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control’s Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (SCDHEC-OCRM) and Bureau of Water, and the S.C. Department of Natural Resources-Marine Resources Division; private foundations; business; and industry.

#### **5. Operation Locations**

The Consortium’s main office is located at 287 Meeting Street in Charleston, South Carolina. Specialists working for the S.C. Sea Grant Extension Program are located in offices in Beaufort, Charleston, Conway, and Georgetown, South Carolina.

#### **6. Employees**

The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium currently has 7.14 state FTEs and 6.86 federal FTEs. In addition, the Consortium employs six temporary grant employees and two hourly employees. The trend in number of FTEs essentially has remained constant over time (see Figure 7.4.A). Five of the Consortium’s 14 FTE positions were vacant during FY11-12 due to budget reductions incurred over the past four years.

#### **7. Regulatory Environment**

The Consortium operates in an office environment; it itself has no regulatory or management functions. Its employees must adhere to the standard provisions of state and federal regulations that would apply to an office environment. The Consortium also operates under both state and federal legislative mandates.

#### **8. Performance Improvement Systems**

Examples of the performance improvement systems used at the Consortium include:

- Formal, external National Sea Grant College Program (NSGCP) evaluations (on a continual basis; the Consortium is evaluated by the NSGCP office on an annual basis, and is exposed to an external Site Visit and an external Program Review Panel PRP process will be held in Fall 2012.
- Establishment and engagement of a Consortium Program Advisory Board
- Individual extension specialist advisory committees
- Rigorous, external peer review process (both invited panel and written) for all competitive research, education, and outreach proposals
- Ad hoc “blue ribbon” committee reviews (topic-specific)
- Improved strategic planning and review processes, which engage the agency’s diverse constituencies



- On-going meetings with faculty from member institutions
- Monthly meetings of the Consortium senior leadership (“Core Group”)
- Staff professional development opportunities
- Employee Performance Management System (EPMS)
- Recognition of staff performance with performance raises and bonuses, when possible

## 9. Organizational Structure

The Consortium is structured to optimize communication and feedback linkages necessary for the proper development and implementation of its programs.

**Consortium Member Institutions.** Institutions that hold membership in the Consortium include The Citadel, Clemson University, Coastal Carolina University, the College of Charleston, the Medical University of South Carolina, South Carolina State University, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, and the University of South Carolina. Consortium institutions provide the expertise of their respective faculty and professional staffs, as well as a wide range of facilities, equipment, and matching funds, necessary to carry out the range of programs supported by the Consortium. In addition, each member institution has Institutional Liaisons to provide direct contact between the Consortium staff and each member institution. *As an indication of their support and commitment to the Sea Grant program, each Consortium-member institution waives indirect costs on all Sea Grant-funded projects.*

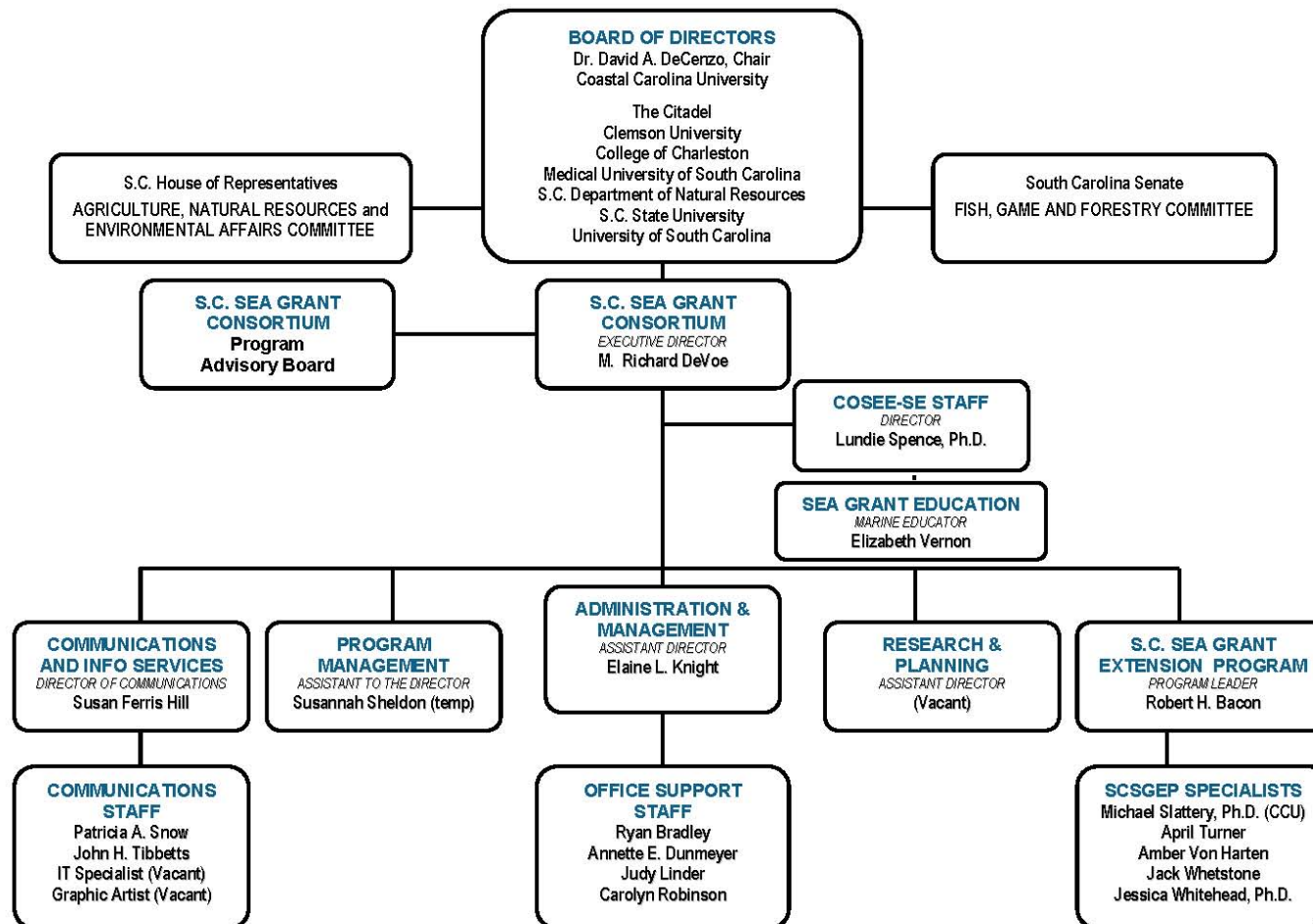
**Consortium Board of Directors.** Activities of the Consortium are governed by authorizing committees of the S.C. General Assembly and a Board of Directors to which the Agency Head reports (see organizational chart on next page). The Board of Directors includes the chief executive officers of the Consortium's member institutions. The Board meets annually to review Consortium program policies and procedures. The Board provides a direct line of communication between the Consortium Agency Head and the higher administrative levels of its eight member institutions.

**Consortium Agency Head.** The legislation creating the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium also established the position of Agency Head. The Agency Head is responsible for managing the Sea Grant program for South Carolina, including development and implementation of Sea Grant proposals, oversight of the proposal solicitation and review process, communication with the National Sea Grant College Program office, management and oversight of all Sea Grant projects and programs, and management of fiscal resources. The Consortium is also expected to seek funding from a variety of extramural sources, which represents an ever-increasing percentage (over 90 percent) of total Consortium support.



## ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

# S.C. Sea Grant Consortium





## 10. Appropriations/ Expenditures Chart

### Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations

Major Budget Categories	FY 10-11 Actual Expenditures		FY 11-12 Actual Expenditures		FY 12-13 Appropriations Act	
	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Service	\$ 954,285	\$ 218,817	\$ 816,085	\$ 209,042	\$1,163,503	\$ 260,829
Other Operating	\$ 348,826	\$ 82,603	\$ 302,011	\$ 62,964	\$ 564,074	\$ 90,473
Special Items	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$	\$
Permanent Improvements	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Case Services	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Distributions to Subdivisions	\$2,639,046	\$ -	\$2,674,305	\$	\$4,012,355	\$
Fringe Benefits	\$ 266,647	\$ 62,138	\$ 228,731	\$ 61,313	\$ 308,077	\$ 76,921
Non-recurring	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,208,804</b>	<b>\$ 363,558</b>	<b>\$4,021,132</b>	<b>\$ 333,319</b>	<b>\$6,048,009</b>	<b>\$ 428,223</b>

### Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	10-11 Actual Expenditures	11-12 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental Bills	\$0	\$0
Capital Reserve Funds	\$0	\$0
Bonds	\$0	\$0

## 11. Major Program Areas

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area Purpose (Brief)	FY 10-11 Budget Expenditures	FY 11-12 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross References for Financial Results*
01000000-Administration	Manage and administer the Sea Grant Program and related activities to support, improve, and share research, education, training, and advisory services in fields related to ocean and coastal resources.	<b>State:</b> 363,557 <b>Federal:</b> 3,736,145 <b>Other:</b> 109,102 <b>Total:</b> 4,208,804 <b>% of Total Budget: 100</b>	<b>State:</b> 333,319 <b>Federal:</b> 3,617,016 <b>Other:</b> 70,797 <b>Total:</b> 4,021,132 <b>% of Total Budget: 100</b>	Sections 7.3 & 7.4 Table 7.3.A Figure 7.3.A Figure 7.4.A Figure 7.4.B



### Section III: CATEGORY 1 – SENIOR LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

#### **1.1. How Senior Leaders Set, Deploy, and Ensure Two-way Communications**

**Consortium Core Group.** The Consortium is led by the Agency Head, but is managed and organized in a non-hierarchical fashion. An internal mechanism that has been established by the Consortium to facilitate a programmed team leadership approach is the Consortium’s “Core Group.” The Core Group, which consists of the Agency Head, the Assistant Director, the Assistant Director for Research and Planning, the Program Manager, the Extension Program Leader, and the Director of Communications, facilitates communication and information exchange among the Consortium’s management staff. Meetings are held on a monthly basis to ensure efficient and effective communications and program direction. Using this “team” approach, the Agency Head can ensure that Consortium policies, programs, and activities are focused on the agency’s priority needs. The Core Group is responsible for setting the agency’s short- and long-term directions, expectations, and ethical standards.

**Staff Meetings and Retreats.** The Agency Head mandates monthly staff meetings to which all Consortium staff attend. Staff meetings are used as a mechanism to ensure that the values and goals of the agency are understood. Monthly staff meetings also provide another forum for sharing information and discussing the Consortium’s progress toward strategic goals. To ensure that all Consortium staff understand the agency’s strategic plan and quality expectations, Consortium-wide retreats are held. Staff are encouraged to share their ideas about ways to improve the agency’s performance. The staff fully participated in the development and alignment of the Consortium’s 2010-13 strategic and implementation plan, *“The Changing Face of Coastal South Carolina: Valuing Resources – Adapting to Change.”*

#### **1.2. How Senior Leaders Focus on Customers and other Stakeholders**

All S.C. Sea Grant Consortium programs and activities are driven by input and guidance provided by the agency’s diverse and varied stakeholders throughout South Carolina and the southeast United States, and the agency establishes these relationships in a number of ways.

**Staff Leadership.** One critical way that Consortium managers demonstrate leadership and engage the agency’s diverse stakeholder community is through their involvement in leadership roles with a number of public, private, and non-governmental organizations (NGO). Staff assume key roles in organizations, professional societies, and activities that advance both the mission and the visibility of the Consortium, which enables it to better serve the needs of its constituencies. Selected examples of the many leadership roles the Agency Head and Consortium staff play in the community, the state, the region, and the nation are listed in the Consortium’s 2010 Site Visit Team Briefing Material, which can be found at <http://www.scseagrant.org/Content/?cid=461>.

**Involvement of Stakeholders in Planning and Review.** The Consortium consistently seeks involvement and input from its Board of Directors, Program Advisory Board, Institutional Liaisons, S.C. Sea Grant Extension Program (SCSGEP) Specialist Advisory Committees, and its constituencies (see section III.3.1) to help shape Consortium priorities and programs (see section





III.2). This ensures that our activities are responsive to the needs of the Consortium's stakeholders and allows us to determine (1) priority needs pertaining to coastal and ocean resources use and conservation, (2) current activities that are underway to address these needs, (3) priority needs that are not being adequately addressed by current activities, and (4) most importantly, specific potential actions that the Consortium can take to address these unmet needs.

### **1.3. How the Organization Addresses its Programs' Impacts on the Public**

The primary functions of the Consortium are to identify priority coastal and marine resource needs – economic, environmental, and social – that can be addressed through research, education and/or extension programs, to solicit and secure funding to support these activities, and to generate and provide resultant information to stakeholders in forms that they can use. To ensure that Consortium activities are consistent with public needs and are of high quality, the Consortium (1) regularly canvasses agency stakeholders to assess current needs and issues, (2) employs a rigorous peer review and evaluation process of all proposals submitted to the agency (see section III.4.5), (3) solicits formal evaluations from all Consortium conference and workshop participants, (4) is formally evaluated by the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program Office (NSGO) through the National Sea Grant program evaluation process, and (5) conducts constituent surveys during its strategic plan revision and *Coastal Heritage* mailing list update processes, both of which are being performed at the time of this report

The Consortium generates two primary “products” for its constituencies – program funding and information. The agency has no resource management or regulatory responsibilities, nor does it produce or manufacture anything that would pose a public risk. All products, activities, and services generated by the Consortium are driven by constituent needs.

### **1.4. Fiscal, Legal, and Regulatory Accountability by Senior Leadership**

**Internal Procedures.** The agency's *South Carolina Grant Consortium Handbook: A Staff Guide to the Internal Operations of the Agency* details the Consortium's programmatic, staff, and administrative policies. The handbook underwent a major revision in Fall 2008, and was approved by the Consortium Board of Directors. It is made available to all Consortium employees.

**Fiscal Procedures.** The Consortium adheres to the fiscal and administrative rules and regulations that accompany all federal grant and contract agreements. The Consortium also employs strong internal controls for the review and approval of project expenditures. Purchase requisitions are reviewed for appropriateness and availability of funds prior to approval. Receiving reports are reconciled against purchase orders issued and approved. Payment is generated through the Comptroller General in Columbia, SC. The State Auditor's office audited the Consortium's FY11 records, the results of which showed no deficiencies in the agency's budget and accounting procedures.

**Recent Site Visits and Reviews.** The Consortium is externally reviewed on an annual basis by the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program, and is typically reviewed by the S.C. State Auditor's Office every year. All recent review and audit results were very positive and revealed no major deficiencies in programmatic or administrative aspects of Consortium operations.



### **1.5. Key Performance Measures**

In addition to the materials and metrics provided to the National Sea Grant College Program Office as part of its Program Assessment process (see below), the Consortium's senior leadership annually documents and reviews the following program management and administration metrics:

#### **Mission Accomplishment**

- Rating by the external National Sea Grant Program Assessment process
- Number of professional awards for its *Coastal Heritage* magazine and other products
- Number of proposals prepared and submitted; number of proposals funded
- Number of faculty supported at the Consortium's universities
- Number of graduate and undergraduate students supported through Consortium funding
- Number of K-12 teachers with formal ocean science-based training and graduate credit
- Number of K-12 students reached
- Number of curricula developed (*new*)
- Implementation planning milestones met (qualitative)
- Grant award and interagency billing and accounting processes within a two-week timeframe (qualitative)

#### **Customer Satisfaction**

- Number of extension workshops and presentations, and attendance
- Number of extension publications and products produced
- Number of communications publications and products produced
- Number of unsolicited requests for publications and products
- Number of publications distributed
- Number of news releases distributed; number of media placements as a result
- Number of unsolicited media placements
- Number of hits, unique visits, and downloads to the Consortium Web sites
- Number of coastal site captains and individual volunteers on the coast in Beach Sweep

#### **Financial Performance**

- State recurring funds secured
- Extramural (competitive and otherwise) funding secured from non-state sources
- Return on investment (federal funding to state funding)
- Annual single agency audit with no significant findings

#### **Human Resource Results**

- Consortium staff retention/vacancy levels
- Number of staff training and development opportunities
- Staffing level of Sea Grant Extension Specialists

### **1.6. Senior Leadership Use of Organizational Performance Review Findings**

As one of 32 Sea Grant College Programs that exist across the United States, the Consortium is subject to a rigorous Program Assessment and Evaluation process administered by the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program Office. The Consortium was most recently subject to a National Sea Grant College Program Site Visit Review on September 21-22, 2010.

The Agency Head also convenes special panels as needed to evaluate all or part of the Consortium's operations and programs.





The Board of Directors is kept apprised of organizational performance, and their input is solicited to improve the agency's performance and responsibilities.

### **1.7. Succession Planning and Development of Future Organizational Leaders**

The Consortium's senior leaders have focused their attention on staff succession, since one of the agency's top managers formally retired in April 2011, and two more are at or nearing retirement age. The Agency Head and senior administrative staff have regular meetings (averaging one every two months) to discuss professional and budgeting goals and staffing needs. Senior leadership has filled staff positions with individuals who bring with them the potential to serve in leadership roles for the agency in the future.

### **1.8. How Leaders Create an Environment for Performance Improvement and Accomplishment of Strategic Objectives**

The Consortium's leadership uses the agency's strategic planning process, advisory groups, feedback from internal and external reviews, and staff input to set key organizational priorities for improvement, and communicates this information to staff through the Core Group and monthly staff meetings.

### **1.9. How Senior Leaders Create Environment for Organizational and Workforce Learning**

The Consortium's leadership and staff play key leadership roles in organizations, professional societies, and activities that advance the mission of the Consortium and the visibility of the state of South Carolina, and enable it to better serve the needs of its constituencies and communities. Areas of emphasis are determined through the agency's strategic and implementation planning process, and refined during meetings of the Core Group. This has been particularly important these past three years as the Consortium has been brought onto the statewide SCEIS system.

### **1.10. How Senior Leaders Engage and Empower Workforce and Recognize Performance**

The Agency Head and senior leaders encourage all staff to be proactive in taking on initiatives. "Going the extra mile" is rewarded through merit pay increases when appropriate, or recognition through announcements of employee accomplishments at the monthly staff meetings or by email communications. Performance is formally recognized in the employee's EPMS file.

### **1.11. How Senior Leaders Support and Strengthen Communities**

The senior leaders participate in community activities by serving on boards (the Agency Head serves on the Board of Directors of the Noiset Foundation, the Slocum-Lunz Foundation, and the LowCountry Institute, for example). The agency sponsors workshops and seminars in various communities throughout the state where timely subjects such as coastal development, sea level rise, and hurricane preparedness are discussed. Extension specialists devote 100% of their time serving constituents in their particular specialties (e.g., fisheries or hazards issues). Contributions made by Consortium staff to communities can be found in the Consortium's 2010 Site Visit Team Briefing Book at <http://www.scseagrant.org/Content/?cid=461>.

## **CATEGORY 2 – STRATEGIC PLANNING**

**2.1 Strategic Planning Process.** The goal of the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium's strategic planning process is to maximize the ability of Consortium's research, education, and outreach programs to



address the coastal resource needs of South Carolina. The Consortium's ability to anticipate and respond to constituent's needs is critical to its success in serving the state. For the reporting period, the Consortium has been operating under its 2010-13 Strategic and Implementation Plan.

The five Programmatic themes for the Consortium's 2010-2013 Strategic and Implementation Plan are:

The Coastal and Ocean Landscape

**Strategic Vision** – The ecological and economic value of coastal and ocean ecosystem processes are documented and resultant information and tools are delivered to state and local decision-makers, resource managers, and interested public.

Sustainable Coastal Development and Economy

**Strategic Vision** – Decision-makers are aware of the impacts of population growth and development on coastal and ocean ecosystems, and apply science-based management tools and techniques to balance this growth with resource conservation.

Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture

**Strategic Vision** – Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the coastal region that is compatible with changing demographics, business development, regulatory environments, and long-term conservation of natural and cultural resources.

Hazard Resilience in Coastal Communities

**Strategic Vision** – Coastal residents, communities, and businesses understand the risks and vulnerabilities associated with both chronic and episodic coastal natural hazard events; and are prepared for and able to recover from them with minimal disruption to social, economic, and natural systems.

Scientific Literacy and Workforce Development

**Strategic Vision** – An informed and engaged public understands the value and vulnerability of coastal and marine resources, demands science-based decisions about the conservation, use and management of those resources, and supports the development of a well-trained workforce that will make this a reality.

The Consortium has also included three Management themes in its 2010-13 Strategic Plan:

Planning, Program Management, and Overall Performance

**Strategic Vision** – The Consortium is the best Sea Grant program in the nation and is the most efficiently and effectively managed state agency in South Carolina.

Connecting with Users

**Strategic Vision** – The Consortium is the primary source for applied coastal and ocean resource information in South Carolina.

Human Resources

**Strategic Vision** – The Consortium is fully staffed with professionals of diverse skills to effectively serve the varied interests of our constituents.

The planning process for developing our 2010-13 Strategic and Implementation Plan included the identification of key focus areas based on the outcome of a constituent survey, alignment of Consortium goals and strategic themes with the National Sea Grant College Program Strategic Plan, review and endorsement by the Consortium's Program Advisory Board, and final review and approval by the Consortium Board of Directors. The constituent survey was conducted online to determine the most pressing issues facing South Carolina. Constituents surveyed



included researchers, natural resource managers, coastal decision-makers, private sector representatives, educators, and members of the public.

**The Consortium's Program Advisory Board (PAB)** was established in 2005 and meets approximately once per year. Membership on the Consortium PAB includes 30 representatives from a mix of academic, agency, business, and public interest organizations from South Carolina and adjacent coastal states. The purpose of the Consortium PAB is to:

- Provide the Consortium with a broad perspective on South Carolina's critical coastal and marine resource issues, needs and opportunities
- Review and evaluate input received from Consortium stakeholders for use in revising and focusing the agency's strategic and implementation plans
- Offer strategic guidance and advice to the Consortium as it develops and implements research, education, and outreach programs and projects
- Advise the Agency Head regarding emerging trends in coastal and marine resource policy and management
- Identify potential opportunities for funding support, new partnerships, and innovative ways of "doing business"

The PAB has met eight times; the goal of the first meeting was to educate the PAB about the Consortium's activities and seek their input on pressing issues. The goals of the most recent meeting held in January 2012 were to discuss Consortium state-level and regional initiatives and improvements in communications and information sharing with key decision-makers.

**2.1.a. Organizational Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.** One of the Consortium's greatest strengths and opportunities is the structure of the agency established by the S.C. General Assembly. By virtue of its structure as a consortium, the Consortium operates in partnership with its eight member institutions in planning, implementing, and administering its research, education and outreach programs. Another strength of the Consortium is its role as an objective, science-based information provider, with no regulatory or management responsibilities. As such, the Consortium can interact with a variety of audiences in its role as an information provider, broker, facilitator, and catalyst on coastal and marine resource conservation, management, and utilization issues, without engendering in them the kind of wariness and mistrust that often characterizes relationships between the "regulator and regulated." On the other hand, the Consortium is a relatively small state agency with limited staff and operational resources and no infrastructure assets; thus it depends heavily on the willing engagement of its Consortium member institutions to provide expertise, facilities, and institutional capabilities in order to deliver its products and services. As an independent state agency, it must continually justify its existence and value to the taxpayers of South Carolina.

**2.1.b. Financial, Regulatory, Societal, and Other Potential Risks.** Among the greatest risks to Consortium administrative and programmatic stability and program consistency is the financial risk associated with the exigencies of annual appropriations and grant funding at both the state and federal levels. To address this risk, the Consortium has attempted to diversify its revenue stream through extramural funding, and engaged a subcommittee of its PAB to provide guidance to the agency on strategies for securing extramural funding from non-traditional sources. This strategy has served to mitigate the effects of annually varying state and federal funding (see



section III.7.3).

**2.1.c. Shifts in Technology and Customer Preferences.** In order to maintain and foster relevant, timely, and integrated research and outreach programs, the Consortium must continually adapt to changing technology. Participation by Consortium staff and partners in teleconferences, video conferences, and Web conferences is increasing to reduce travel costs. The Consortium is also adapting its Program Management Information System to enhance efficiencies in providing administrative support to its member institutions, and is exploring the use of a variety of social networking methods to deliver and exchange information more efficiently and at a lower cost to diverse audiences.

**2.1.d. Workforce Capabilities and Needs.** The Consortium believes one of its greatest assets is its employees. To ensure the human resource component of the agency has the appropriate capabilities, the agency's Strategic and Implementation Plan for 2010-13 has identified, in its Administrative section, the goal of achieving an "environment of excellence" and has included metrics to assess progress. In addition, the agency maintains its internal and external procedures manuals to ensure consistency within the agency and in interactions with agency partners.

**2.1.e. Organizational Continuity in Emergencies.** The Consortium has an emergency plan in place which consists of maintaining all files on a server which is backed up regularly and maintained offsite. During an emergency, all computers and servers are unplugged, raised off the floor, and covered. After the emergency, the servers can be turned on, which will allow for remote access to email in the event the office cannot be opened. This will ensure the Agency can continue to function soon after the emergency. Senior leaders share contact information (e.g., cell phone numbers) with all staff in order to remain available during emergencies.

**2.1.f. Ability to Execute the Strategic Plan.** The agency Core Group ensures that the Consortium Strategic Plan is executed through the development of a four-year Implementation Plan. The goal of the Implementation Plan is to provide a work plan for the agency staff to follow, which identifies specific programs and activities to be undertaken during the course of the year, includes performance measures and target metrics, and which will be tracked to document progress against the agency's Strategic Goals.

## **2.2. Key Strategic Objectives Address Strategic Challenges**

The Consortium's overarching goal of maximizing the potential of the state's coastal and marine resources is a broad one. To effectively direct its day-to-day activities toward this goal over the past year, the Consortium organized its research, education, and extension activities in defined programmatic areas tied to eight strategic goals (five programmatic; three administrative) based on its 2010-13 Strategic Plan. Further, the Consortium staff have developed a four-year Implementation Plan for 2010-13 which is designed to address the goals by focusing efforts on priority issues. All agency staff have participated in developing the Plans, and each has specific responsibilities, documented in the form of metrics, for completing specified tasks – so it is truly a team effort guided by one vision and mission. This enables us to look at our results in a manner consistent with the Baldrige Excellence Criteria. The Consortium's strategic goals are listed in the Strategic Planning Chart (below). The Consortium's "Key Agency Action Plans/Initiatives," "Performance Measures," and "Targets" (= metrics) are not included in the



## Strategic Planning

Program Number and Title	Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 11-12 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative(s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures*
I. Administration	1. Document the ecological and economic value of coastal and ocean ecosystems processes and deliver the resultant information and tools to state and local decision-makers, resource managers, and interested public.	See Category 2.2 for brief explanation	Section 7.1; Table 7.1.A; Table 7.1.B; Appendix 1
	2. Enhance the awareness of coastal decision-makers about the impacts of population growth and development on coastal and ocean ecosystems, and apply science-based management tools and techniques to balance growth with resource conservation.	See Category 2.2 for brief explanation	Section 7.1; Table 7.1.A; Table 7.1.B; Appendix 1
	3. Foster the development of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture that is compatible with changing demographics, business development, regulatory environments, and long-term conservation of natural and cultural resources.	See Category 2.2 for brief explanation	Section 7.1; Table 7.1.A; Table 7.1.B; Appendix 1
	4. Generate and extend information to coastal residents, communities, and businesses to increase their understanding of the risks and vulnerabilities associated with both chronic and episodic coastal natural hazard events, and to improve their ability to prepare for and recover from them with minimal disruption to social, economic, and natural systems.	See Category 2.2 for brief explanation	Section 7.1; Table 7.1.A; Table 7.1.B; Appendix 1
	5. Improve understanding of the value and vulnerability of coastal and marine resources through K-12 and informal education efforts and support the development of a well-trained workforce.	See Category 2.2 for brief explanation	Section 7.1; Table 7.1.A; Table 7.1.B; Table 7.1.C; Appendix 1
	6. Develop, maintain, and enhance the Consortium's funding levels and planning, financial, and reporting systems to support the programmatic goals and established performance metrics of the Consortium's research, education, extension, and training programs.	See Category 2.2 for brief explanation	Section 7.1; Section 7.2; Table 7.1.A; Table 7.1.B; Table 7.3.A; Figure 7.3.A; Appendix 2





Program Number and Title	Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective (cont.)	Related FY 11-12 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative(s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures*
I. Administration (cont.)	7. Ensure that problems and needs of those who live and work along the coast are accurately identified, and that Consortium programs are effective in providing the necessary science-based information and that this information is delivered to target audiences in a timely fashion and appropriate formats.	See Category 2.2 for brief explanation	Section 7.1; Section 7.2; Section 7.3; Table 7.1.A; Figure 7.2.A; Figure 7.2.B; Table 7.3.A; Figure 7.3.A
	8. Encourage an “environment of excellence” to maintain and hire talented staff and support the development of professional and other skills among the Consortium staff in partnership with other Federal, state, and local agencies and professional organizations.	See Category 2.2 for brief explanation	Section 7.1; Section 7.2; Section 7.4; Table 7.1.A; Table 7.2.A; Figure 7.4.A; Figure 7.4.B

\*Key Cross-references are a link to Category 7 – Business Results. The references provide a Chart number that is included in the 7<sup>th</sup> section of this document.

chart (because they are too numerous) – but they can be found in the Consortium’s 2010-13 Strategic and Implementation Plan at <http://www.scseagrant.org/SeaGrant/>.

### 2.3. Development and Tracking of Action Plans

The Consortium’s 2010-13 Strategic and Implementation Plan includes planned efforts for the agency to work toward and achieve its strategic goals. The Implementation Plan specifies tasks to be completed during the subject years, and includes performance measures and detailed metrics which are used to track and measure progress and success. The Consortium’s long-term goal is to conduct a formal and thorough review of each of the Consortium’s strategic program areas every four to five years, and involve stakeholders in this process through mechanisms like workshops and Web-based surveys that include feedback loops. In addition, the Agency has prepared an Agency Activity Inventory for the state for each of the past eight years that includes expected results and outcomes measures for the Consortium’s four primary agency activities: (1) research and education, (2) communications, (3) Sea Grant extension program, and (4) administration. The most recent Agency Activity Inventory report was completed and submitted to the state as part of its state budget request on September 30, 2011.

### 2.4. Communication and Deployment of Strategic Objectives and Action Plans

The goal of the agency’s strategic planning process is to maximize the relevance of Consortium research, education, and outreach programs to key state and regional coastal and marine resource needs. The development of the agency’s strategic plan involved communicating with staff, institutions and faculty, decision makers, and our constituencies. Staff were first consulted at a



strategic planning retreat and follow up meetings with appropriate staff were conducted to ensure we were communicating and deploying the strategic plan. The inclusion of strategic planning objectives in our request for proposals has resulted in communication and deployment of activities by our member institutions and faculty. In addition, coastal decision makers participate in our request for proposal development and review of proposals received which provides additional deployment of our strategic objectives. Finally, the agency's constituents are engaged through the agency's Program Advisory Board (PAB), extension advisory committees, and posting of our strategic plan on our Web site. In addition, copies were targeted to board members, PAB members, agency employees, government officials, and various key constituents.

## **2.5. Measuring Progress on Action Plans**

Performance metrics are identified as a critical element of the agency's implementation plan, and agency-wide metrics are identified in its strategic plan. A set of metrics also is listed in section II.1.5 of this document. Metrics are documented on an annual basis.

## **2.6. Evaluation and Improvement of Strategic Planning Process**

The Consortium's strategic objectives reflect the important issues facing the coastal and marine areas of the state. These issues have been developed with input from the agency's extremely diverse constituencies to ensure the Consortium remains responsive to the needs of the state and its citizens. The agency's Plan includes indicators of success and actions to undertake to ensure the agency's success in meeting its goals and objectives. In addition, the agency has developed its implementation plan as a means to determine whether we are actually addressing the goals and objectives of the strategic plan, and to what degree. The Consortium's 2010-13 Strategic and Implementation Plan updated the agency's goals, objectives, indicators, and actions and aligned it with the strategic plan of the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program.

## **2.7. Internet Access to Consortium Strategic Plan**

The Consortium's 2010-13 Strategic and Implementation Plan is available to the public at the following Web address: <http://www.scseagrant.org/SeaGrant/>.

# **CATEGORY 3 – CUSTOMER FOCUS**

## **3.1. Identifying Customers, Stakeholders, and Key Requirements**

The Consortium's constituencies can be divided into two categories: institutional and external. The Consortium's institutional constituencies consist of the faculty, staff, and students of the agency's eight member institutions. Externally, the Consortium is charged with serving the needs of an extremely diverse group of organizations, institutions, and individuals representing universities; federal, state, and local natural resource and economic development agencies; business and industry; state and local governments; community groups; non-governmental organizations; K-12 educational institutions; and others. The Consortium utilizes formal and informal methods to assess the needs of its institutional and external customers, including its strategic planning process (see section III.2); active participation in meetings, conferences, and workshops; direct stakeholder contacts; and service on a large number of planning, professional, and organizational committees.





The Consortium maintains direct and frequent contact with coastal and marine user groups and the general public, and serves as a conduit between institutional knowledge-seekers and coastal and marine knowledge-users, through its extension and communications activities. These outreach programs assure that (1) problems and needs of those who live and work along the coast are accurately identified, (2) projects and programs are effectively providing the necessary science-based information, and (3) this information is delivered to target audiences in a timely fashion and "user-friendly" format. Further, these users play an active role in the ongoing process of refining the Consortium's strategic plan to meet changing state and regional needs.

The Consortium's Sea Grant Extension Program involves users in formal and informal ways in its program planning and evaluation process in the areas of Coastal Community Development, Coastal Processes, Coastal Hazards, Marine Aquaculture, and Marine Fisheries. It begins with Sea Grant Extension specialists, who live and work in coastal communities and interact daily with their program clientele. This informal daily interaction creates a relationship of trust between the specialists and the communities they serve, and provides the specialist with a deep knowledge of the issues and concerns among members of the user community. Another informal mechanism by which the extension specialists gain a knowledge and understanding of stakeholder interests and concerns is through participation on a variety of program-related, community-based committees and task forces. These focused, topical interactions bring the specialists into regular contact with state agency representatives, representatives of local government, community interest groups, the business community and individual citizens. In addition, each specialist is guided by a formal advisory committee consisting of local and state government agency representatives, business owners, representatives of community organizations, individual citizens, and the Sea Grant Extension Program Leader. The information, advice, and guidance received through these informal and formal means is then fed into the formal Consortium strategic planning process.

The Consortium's communications program supports the agency's mission by identifying general users of coastal and marine resource information, assessing their needs, and providing them with information to address problems, enhance opportunities, and increase their understanding of coastal issues and our impact upon the marine environment. The communications program sets its objectives in accordance with the agency's strategic plan, and builds visibility and support for Consortium programs and activities. In support of Consortium goals, communications employs various means to communicate with the public, including regular publications (e.g., the quarterly magazine *Coastal Heritage* and the agency's "impacts" newsletter *Inside Sea Grant*, along with its new e-newsletter *CoastalScience@Work*), media relations (e.g., press releases and feature stories), and the agency's main Web site ([www.scseagrant.org](http://www.scseagrant.org)), as well as topic-specific sites (e.g., [www.sccoastalinfo.org](http://www.sccoastalinfo.org) and [www.cosee.se.org](http://www.cosee.se.org)), which are regularly updated. Communications also organizes and spearheads special events such as the annual Beach Sweep/River Sweep (see section III.7.2) in partnership with the SCDNR. The Consortium's communications efforts ensure that information is delivered to target audiences in a timely fashion and "user-friendly" format.

### **3.2. Listening, Learning, and Meeting Expectations**

Several internal mechanisms have been established by the Consortium to facilitate a programmed team approach to address coastal and marine resource issues and constituency needs. This



includes the Core Group (see section III.1.1), the Consortium's Program Advisory Board (section III.2), Web site, and *Coastal Heritage* readership survey.

Per current State guidelines, the Consortium's staff continues to improve the Consortium Web site ([www.scseagrant.org](http://www.scseagrant.org)) by enhancing its interactive features, keeping the information up-to-date and relevant, and has made the site assessable to people with disabilities. The Consortium has a Web Compliance Transition Plan in effect, and has since then posted a retrofitted Web site, which is 508 Compliant (for more information, see section III.7.2).

The Consortium also conducts regular subscriber surveys, the last of which was included in the winter 2011 issue of *Coastal Heritage*. *Coastal Heritage* is the Consortium's award-winning quarterly publication covering diverse topics related to physical and biological sciences, coastal and marine education, and coastal culture and heritage. Results from the subscriber survey were collated and analyzed. The next survey is being conducted at the time of this writing.

### **3.3. Key Customer Access Mechanisms**

The Consortium consistently seeks involvement and input from its constituencies to help shape Consortium priorities and programs (see section III.2). This ensures that our activities are responsive to the needs of the Consortium's stakeholders and allows us to determine:

- Priority needs in South Carolina related to coastal and ocean resources use and conservation;
- Current activities in South Carolina that are underway to address these needs;
- Priority needs that are not being adequately addressed by current activities; and
- Most importantly, specific potential actions that the Consortium can take to address these unmet needs.

The goal of the Consortium's strategic planning process is to provide a framework upon which to maximize the effectiveness of our research, education, and outreach programs to address the coastal and marine resource needs of South Carolina. In addition to its on-going strategic planning process, the Consortium utilizes other means to enhance its ability to identify constituent groups and their needs. It does this through interaction with members of the Consortium's Board of Directors, the agency's Program Advisory Board, liaisons at the Consortium's member institutions, its Sea Grant Extension Program specialists, and its Communications and Information Services staff.

### **3.4. Measuring Customer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction and Improving Agency Actions**

The Consortium engages a number of techniques to measure constituent satisfaction, including the use of post-program participant evaluation surveys, advisory committee mechanisms, direct client feedback, focus groups, and surveys (see section III.2) to gather longer term information on the effectiveness of agency programs.

### **3.5. Using Information and Feedback for Relevancy and Improvement**

The Consortium seeks to clearly identify constituent needs, and develop programs to address those needs. We deliver the information once it is generated, or once it is found, and we steer the constituents to the appropriate sources if we cannot provide it. We are (and must be) objective brokers of non-biased information. Trust is the key in all of our interactions – building trust is



one of our core values. Our program initiatives are all based on input from our stakeholders, solicited via formal and informal vehicles, as noted in various sections throughout the report.

In the Consortium's popular *Coastal Heritage* magazine, there is a "request for comments" note, and our Web site solicits input as well. We regularly seek detailed comments via surveys distributed at every workshop, conference, and event we organize, and we receive input from review panels and advisory bodies regarding programmatic priorities and funding decisions that we set and make respectively.

We use this feedback to revise and update our four-year Strategic and Implementation Plans, and to identify and shape our priority research and outreach needs that are included in our biennial Request for Proposals.

### **3.6. Building Relationships with Customers and Stakeholder Groups**

We build and maintain solid relationships through our daily interactions with our various stakeholders. We make it evident to them how we support their goals and needs, while receiving a continual stream of information from them on ways to better serve their needs. Building strong, working relationships is the bedrock for the agency's success. One of our guiding management principles is to seek out the *active engagement* of our stakeholder groups. The Consortium's success is built on a strong foundation of *partnerships* formed with appropriate individuals and groups. Partnerships help leverage funds and resources that can be made available for any given project or program, and make the process more interactive and engaging, while increasing the participants' stake in the actions being taken or studied. In fact, our end products have "value-added" based upon this approach of inclusion. One example is the present, ongoing engagement of various constituencies throughout the state to participate in the process of determining and defining the scope of shoreline change and its relationship to coastal development in South Carolina.

## **CATEGORY 4 – MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS, AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1. Operations, Processes, and Systems for Tracking Operational and Financial Performance**

The Consortium's programmatic, operational, and financial goals are determined through a system of strategic planning that includes management and administrative as well as programmatic goals and objectives, performance measures, and target metrics. Administrative and management goals and objectives are developed by the Agency Head and Assistant Director, according to National Sea Grant guidelines, state regulations, and with input from the Consortium member institutions. The Core Group assists the Agency Head in making decisions on a broad array of management and program-related issues. It also functions to keep the parts of the agency working together smoothly and efficiently. Programmatic input is received through direct and indirect stakeholder feedback that includes Sea Grant extension advisory committees, one-on-one contacts, email/internet user surveys, scoping workshops, and feedback from the agency's Program Advisory Board (see section III.2). This process helps to set research, outreach, and administrative priorities, determine the agency's goals to acquire non-Sea Grant/non-state revenue, and is the basis for establishing implementation plans for the agency and annual work plans for program staff.



#### 4.2. Data/Information Analysis for Effective and Innovative Decision Making

Administratively, the Consortium uses a basic Management Information System (MIS) (along with paper backup) to manage the flow of project information and track progress. The agency's current MIS system needs to be upgraded to a Web-based system that can manage information more efficiently, freeing up time for staff to address other important needs. An alternative web-base proposal and project reporting system, developed by MIT, is being examined for adaptation by the Consortium this coming year. When launched, this new MIS system will allow our major "internal" constituency, scientists and staff from our eight member institutions, to electronically submit proposals for agency consideration and provide progress and completion reports for review, all of which would be captured into the database.

Programmatically, the Consortium uses data and information gathered through the processes described in section III.4.1 to establish plans of work with the basic programmatic delivery strategies – research, extension, education, and communications. Included in these plans of work are program goals and objectives. For each of these, measures of success are established and methods of evaluation implemented. Objectives are user-driven and measured through specific benchmarks or outcomes. Programs are evaluated against these, through participant feedback (e.g., workshop surveys), and through the annual feedback of advisory committees.

The Consortium now requires that all research and education proposals include sections that describe in detail (1) how the proposed work relates to resource management issues and/or other identified problems and priorities, and (2) the expected outcomes of the work on an annual basis. Annual and final project reports are also required to address these issues and outcomes. Consortium proposals, programs and projects are evaluated using the following measures:

**A. Rationale** – The degree to which the proposed project addresses an important state and/or regional issue, problem, or opportunity in the development, use, and/or conservation of marine or coastal resources.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (10)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (8)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (2)
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**B. Programmatic Justification** – The degree to which the proposed project addresses the priorities outlined in the guidance provided by the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium in its Request for Proposals and other program information.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (10)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (8)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (2)
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**C. Clarity of Objectives** – The degree to which the proposed objectives address the problem or opportunity identified in the Rationale and Programmatic Justification sections and, in the case of research proposals, the relevance of the hypotheses upon which the objectives are based.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (15)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (12)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (9)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (3)
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**D. Scientific/Outreach Methods** – The degree to which the feasibility of the proposed methods and design of the proposed project will address the stated objectives, as well as the degree to which the use and extension of innovative, state-of-the-art methods to be used in the proposed project will advance the scientific or outreach discipline.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (15)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (12)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (9)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (3)
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**E. Expected Outcomes** – The degree to which the planned outcomes are clearly defined, in terms of interim and final measurable results and products, and with a reasonable timeframe for completion and delivery. (Outcomes should be identified for each year, be measurable, and have a positive impact on the systems, technology, or management practices under study (e.g., cost savings, revenue generation, jobs created, new products/tools developed, workforce development).

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (15)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (12)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (9)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (3)
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**F. User Engagement** – The degree to which targeted users of the results of the proposed activity have been brought into the planning of the activity, will be brought into the execution of the activity, and will be kept apprised of progress and results, the adequacy of the methods to be used to engage the users, and whether resources have been allotted for stakeholder engagement.

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Excellent (10)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Very Good (8)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Good (6)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Fair (4)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Poor (2)</b>
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**G. Dissemination of Results** – The degree to which the proposed project includes specific strategies for information delivery to and product development for identified targeted users (e.g., through the scientific literature, Sea Grant Extension and Communications products, educational efforts, etc.).

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Excellent (15)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Very Good (12)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Good (9)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Fair (6)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Poor (3)</b>
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**H. Investigator's Knowledge of Field** – The degree to which the investigator(s) is (are) experienced, proficient, and recognized in their respective fields.

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Excellent (5)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Very Good (4)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Good (3)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Fair (2)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Poor (1)</b>
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**I. Adequacy of Budget** – The degree to which the proposed budget will adequately support the proposed work and provide the necessary and appropriate amount and distribution of funding across budget categories.

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Excellent (5)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Very Good (4)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Good (3)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Fair (2)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Poor (1)</b>
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<b>Total Score:</b>	
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#### 4.3 Key Measures, Reviewing, and Staying Current

Key measures are drawn from the two basic agency functions: (1) administration/management and (2) programmatic efforts. Key measures employed in administration/management include revenue growth, staffing levels, and the relationship between administrative (grant management) staff and volume of grants being administered. These are developed primarily by the Agency Head and Assistant Director. The Assistant Director is in charge of administration and management, following guidelines established by the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program and the State of South Carolina.

Programmatic measures are more difficult to establish and tie to concrete outcomes. The goal of the Consortium's program elements – research, extension, education and communication – is to provide science-based information to individuals, families, businesses, communities, organizations, and governments for the purpose of informing and enhancing their decision making processes. Key measures include conveyance of information, the creation of partnerships/collaborations, government or community action to address a problem, and changes in law and policy. These are all measures/benchmarks in the process of gathering and communicating science information to Consortium audiences (see section III.7). The Consortium has identified a series of management performance measures within its Agency Activity Inventory (see section III.1.5 for an itemized list); Section III.7 provides actual results.

#### 4.4. Select and Use of Key Comparative Data and Information

The selection and use of comparative data for program evaluation and performance is determined primarily by the guidance the Consortium receives from the National Sea Grant Office. Sources of this guidance include the NOAA and NOAA Sea Grant strategic plans, and the formal Sea Grant Program Assessment guidelines. The former helps to set the broad parameters within which the Consortium builds a program that serves South Carolina. The latter contains specific





criteria and standards (including program metrics) against which the Consortium is evaluated and ranked relative to the other Sea Grant programs nationwide (see section III.4.3).

#### **4.5. Data Integrity, Timeliness, Accuracy, Security and Availability**

**Quality Assurance/Quality Control Process.** The Consortium manages three types of program proposals: (1) full Sea Grant proposals, (2) development proposals, and (3) extramural multi-disciplinary/multi-institutional projects. For Sea Grant, the Consortium issues a biennial “request for proposals” to the faculty and staff of all of its member institutions. When proposals are received, the Consortium distributes them to scientists and experts nationwide for *written peer reviews* (see form in section III.4.2). Agency staff maintains a database of experts in scientific fields relevant to the diverse range of research and outreach projects the Consortium considers for funding. These experts are called upon to evaluate proposals that fit within their areas of expertise. The objective of this review process is to obtain at least three detailed, written reviews of every proposal. An additional on-site Proposal Panel Review is also convened, and includes a group of six to eight professionals (from out-of-state and Federal agencies) who examine the proposals in light of the written reviews and provide advice to the Agency Head, who makes the final decisions about which proposals to include in the agency’s biennial Program Plan proposal submission to the National Sea Grant Office.

In addition to full-proposals, development proposals (also called “seed proposals”) are submitted to the Consortium by faculty or staff to conduct work over shorter periods of time and for modest funding to respond to immediate needs and initiate research along promising avenues. These proposals are also evaluated through written reviews and by members of the agency’s Core Group, which form the basis for funding decisions.

**Conflict-of-Interest Policy.** Another important feature of the Consortium’s review process is its Conflict of Interest Policy, which is designed to protect the integrity of all proposal writers and peer reviewers. The policy requires that potential reviewers recuse themselves if they have (1) a major professor/student relationship with the Principal Investigator (PI); (2) published with the PI in the last five years; (3) been a colleague of the PI in the same academic department or served directly or indirectly in a supervisory role over the PI in the last year; (4) grants, contracts, or any financial interest with a PI; and/or (5) a relationship (by blood or by marriage) to the PI. Each reviewer is required to read and agree to these provisions, and sign the form.

#### **4.6 Organizational Performance Review Findings into Priorities for Improvement**

Organizational review findings from the agency’s 2010 National Sea Grant Site Visit review, input from its Program Advisory Board, and guidance provided by the Board of Directors are integrated into the agency’s strategic planning (see section III.2), its program proposal process, and its performance evaluation system. The Consortium feels these reviews are instrumental in our goal of meeting the needs of our diverse constituencies.

#### **4.7. Maintaining and Using Knowledge Assets**

The Consortium’s current Management Information System (MIS) addresses to some extent one of the Consortium’s major management objectives – the evaluation of organizational performance against goals and standards. The Consortium’s primary archival management systems consist of MIS, the national Sea Grant Office’s PIER (Planning, Implementation, and



Evaluation Resources) MIS system, its previous Omnibus proposals, and briefing materials the agency prepares for the State of South Carolina during its annual budget process and for its Accountability Report, for the National Sea Grant performance evaluation and National Sea Grant Annual Reports, and for other funding sources. Materials, including research reports, Requests for Proposals, Strategic Plans, Consortium publications, and back issues of the Consortium's magazine, *Coastal Heritage*, are also archived on the Consortium's Web site. Consortium publications are also archived at the state library in Columbia.

The Consortium has had only three Agency Heads (including the present one) during its existence. It has become critically important to the agency that organizational knowledge be identified, collected, and passed on to future agency leaders and management staff. Continuous interaction between the agency's leadership and staff – through monthly meetings and daily “managing by walking around” does provide a way in which information is transferred. The preparation and review – by agency leadership and all staff – of detailed “briefing books” for use by external review panels serving on the National Sea Grant Program Assessment Teams every four years – represents a means by which much of the agency's administrative records, program activities, results, and accomplishments are accumulated, documented, and shared.

The Consortium has formally recognized in its Strategic and Implementation Plan that it is becoming critically important that organizational knowledge be identified, collected, and passed on to future agency leaders and staff. Among the mechanisms being used and/or planned to ensure a continuity of collective knowledge into the future include (1) formal and informal leadership training, (2) consistent and regular intra-agency communications, (3) professional development activities, and (4) cross- and succession training. Three Consortium staff are alumni of Leadership South Carolina, and one is an alumnus of the ULI-SC Leadership Institute, and future nominations are planned for additional staff. Professional development activities are a part of each Consortium Extension staff member's annual plan of work; more recently, administrative staff have been attending training to diversify their skill sets and provide the agency with a number of cross-trained staff. Consortium staff members are also encouraged to take leadership roles in professional organizations, as well as program-related groups (including interagency task forces), and coordinating and conference planning committees. Senior extension staff plays a significant role in orienting, mentoring, and partnering with newer extension specialists in program efforts. In addition, monthly staff meetings, the Site Visit review materials, and the agency's internal and external administrative manuals are important resources for maintaining knowledge assets.

## **CATEGORY 5 – WORKFORCE FOCUS**

### **1.1. How Management Organizes and Measures Work**

The Consortium is organized and managed based on programmatic/administrative components as outlined in the agency's strategic plan. The agency has an established Core Group which facilitates communication and information exchange among the agency's on-site and off-site staff members. Using this “team” approach, the Agency Head and senior leadership ensures that agency policies, programs, and activities are focused on priority needs. The Core Group is responsible for setting the short and long-term directions and transmission of pertinent





information to members of their respective staffs. Overall, implementation plans, based on the Consortium's strategic plan, outline work tasks to be accomplished over that time frame.

### **1.2. Effective Communications and Knowledge-Sharing Across the Organization**

Monthly staff meetings serve as one example of how the Consortium exchanges knowledge and best management practices across the organization. Knowledge-sharing also is facilitated by staff meetings within functional groups within the agency; for example, quarterly extension program staff meetings. Since many of the staff are located within one facility, the Agency Head and Assistant Director are in daily communication with Consortium staff. Consortium publications such as *Coastal Heritage* and *Inside Sea Grant* also provide vehicles for the exchange of information across the agency.

### **1.3. Recruiting and Retaining Employees**

The Consortium is a small agency and many of its employees wear more than "one hat." Therefore, in many instances, employees must be cross-trained to be able to perform job functions in more than one program division (administration, communications, education, program research, program development, and extension services) of the office. New employees are given an overview of the agency policies and procedures during the interview stage, and the agency's *South Carolina Grant Consortium Handbook: A Staff Guide to the Internal Operations of the Agency* is made available for their use. New employees are also oriented by the agency's Assistant Director. Employees, as stated before, are informed of training and professional development opportunities to enhance their job skills and knowledge through training at the state, federal, and/or national levels. Consortium staff are encouraged to engage in at least one professional development activity each year.

Employees are recruited through traditional means as well as word of mouth since the marine sciences field is relatively small. In-person interview and references are heavily relied upon in making selection decisions. The Consortium's main barrier to hiring the very best employees is the limited compensation that is allowed for many jobs. The nature of the agency's work tends to compensate for that and it is rare that we do not recruit the best possible candidates. If anything, the process takes longer than we would like.

The Agency Head takes an active role in looking for job enrichment opportunities for staff as an important way to increase job satisfaction, thereby having a positive influence on employee retention.

Nevertheless, the loss of five FTE employees (out of 14) has greatly affected the agency's ability to maintain an effective and efficient work flow. The amount of multi-tasking that is now being asked for from our employees is significant, and has impacted our ability to be innovative and pro-active in seeking alternate sources of programmatic support, and has resulted in one program staff member leaving the agency for another position in state government.

### **1.4. Assessing Workforce Capability**

The Consortium uses a variety of processes to assess workforce capability, capacity needs, competencies and staffing levels. For example, the Consortium's 2004 National Sea Grant Performance Assessment Team identified the need for an assistant director of research and



development at the doctoral level, and such an individual was hired in 2006 (but left in 2011 for another opportunity; this position is now vacant due to budget reductions). Staffing levels are mainly determined by the needs of our constituencies and the scope of funding the agency receives from extramural sources.

Employees are not only rated annually through the Employee Performance Management System, but are assessed throughout the year to keep their performance level as high as possible. They are encouraged to talk to their manager any time they have questions, problems, or concerns. If their supervisor cannot help with their problems or are unable to give them adequate guidance, they are encouraged to talk to the Assistant Director or to the Agency Head, if necessary. The agency finds that these open lines of communication foster enhanced performance and help to promote idea-sharing, enhance teamwork, and foster problem-solving.

### **5.5. Workforce Assessment and Feedback Processes**

Monthly or quarterly meetings with and among the workforce within and across divisions are held regularly. In addition, the Agency Head chairs a monthly staff meeting in which employees share their accomplishments and needs, and inform staff of what is going on within their programs. These meetings help managers assess employee problems and successes.

Additionally, the Agency Head and managers are in constant communication and contact with all staff on a daily basis (“managing by walking around”), and use these opportunities to assess staff morale, and to provide and encourage excellence. This provides direct and constant means by which agency managers can determine whether the workforce is motivated and satisfied with their jobs and working conditions.

### **5.6. Development and Learning Systems for Leaders**

**5.6.a. Agency Leadership.** Several key agency personnel have successfully completed Leadership South Carolina. In turn, those individuals develop leadership skills among the workforce “by example.” The National Sea Grant Extension network has instituted the Sea Grant Extension Academy, which promotes leadership skills among the extension workforce. Three Consortium extension specialists have completed the Academy program (located at NOAA headquarters in Silver Spring, MD).

**5.6.b. Organizational Knowledge.** The topic of organizational knowledge is typically covered at almost all staff meetings by the Agency Head and assistant director. In this way the agency workforce is kept abreast of changes that will impact how effectively they do their jobs.

**5.6.c. Ethical Practices.** Ethical standards, updated regularly, are posted in the employee’s *South Carolina Grant Consortium Handbook: A Staff Guide to the Internal Operations of the Agency*.

**5.6.d. Core Competencies.** The Core Group identifies and shares the agency’s strategic challenges and, through a bottom-up management approach, develops implementation plans that reflect the input of all employees based upon their core competencies and how those competencies can best address the Consortium’s strategic goals. Most recently, the agency workforce was provided a copy of the Consortium’s 2010-13 Strategic and Implementation Plan which identify planned activities by individual.



### **5.7. Workforce Training Needs**

Work force training needs have been addressed in other sub-sections of Category 5.

### **5.8. Using Knowledge and Skills**

When new knowledge skills are identified, employees are encouraged to use them in their respective jobs, and training opportunities are provided for those in the workforce who require it. For example, the Consortium is developing a new Management Information System based on Microsoft Access database software, and employees who will use this system have, or will, receive appropriate training. In addition, all Consortium staff are continuously being trained in the use of the SCEIS Web-based employee management system, which was formally incorporated into the agency in the spring 2010.

### **5.9. Training and Achievement**

Employee training contributes by increasing staff competencies and thereby improving efficiency while limiting mistakes. The SCEIS training is an excellent example of this.

### **5.10 Evaluating Workforce and Effective Leadership**

Primarily, evaluation is accomplished by assessing feedback from our various constituencies on a continuing basis, and also through more formal mechanisms such as Survey Monkey, which was used to seek input into the development of the agency's strategic plan. The Agency Head looks to the Board of Directors as well as the Program Advisory Board for input on the agency's performance.

### **5.11. Motivating the Workforce**

First and foremost, in the hiring process the agency looks for highly motivated individuals who will actively seek opportunities to reach their full potential on their own initiative. In addition, the Agency Head sets a standard for the entire workforce to be the best that they can be. Training opportunities are made available to facilitate the success of employees.

### **5.12. Workforce Well-being**

Informal assessment methods are used to determine workforce well-being. The Agency Head is in daily contact with all employees, other than the few who are housed outside Charleston. The Agency Head has an "open door" policy allowing for employees to discuss their concerns.

Managers formally meet with their staff on a monthly or quarterly basis. Employees are encouraged to participate in these meetings and to voice their opinions and ideas that may improve their efficiency and that of the agency. Employees are also strongly encouraged to join state, regional, and national organizations to enhance their professional development, further develop and sharpen their skills and knowledge, and build leadership capabilities. Each staff member is given the opportunity, at least once a year and if funds are available, to attend a workshop or conference of their choice to enhance his/her job performance and build professional skills. Priority determinations for improvement are made throughout the year during the review process as well as anytime during the year that standards of work production would fall below the acceptable minimum.

In 32 years as a State agency, the Consortium has had only one employee grievance, which was settled satisfactorily without going outside of the agency.



### **5.13. Managing Succession and Effective Career Progression**

How the agency manages progression and succession has been addressed in other subsections of Category 5, as well as elsewhere in the document. Furthermore, hiring decisions are made with these two issues in mind. An individual's potential to progress and succeed to higher responsibilities in the organization is afforded considerable weight in the hiring selection process and ongoing management of the agency. The Agency Head is nearing retirement age and the Assistant Director retired in April 2012; succession plans for both have been put into place.

### **5.14. A Safe, Secure and Healthy Work Environment**

With regard to safety issues, the agency is located in the Washington Light Infantry building in downtown Charleston, a historic structure that has withstood the ravages of hurricanes, earthquakes, and other natural disasters. The office is equipped with working door alarms on each entrance and safety lights operate outside of each entranceway, and the office is equipped with a security alarm system that includes motion detectors. Employees are encouraged to leave in pairs/groups at the close of business during winter (dark) hours.

The Consortium computer servers are backed up on a daily basis. During an emergency/disaster, the back-up tapes are taken off the premises by a delegated staff member until the emergency/disaster has passed. Two members of the agency staff are delegated as representatives to the State's Emergency Disaster Preparedness team and will serve if called on by the State.

## **CATEGORY 6 – PROCESS MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1. Core Competencies and Relationship to Organizational Mission**

Core competencies are determined by senior leaders. Various feedback mechanisms are used to determine the kinds of people and people skills (core competencies) needed for the Consortium to accomplish its mission. The nature of the agency's funding has a major impact on the core competencies required. For example, sea level rise has become a major cause of concern for the state and necessitated the need for a staff person with competency in this area. The agency's core competencies include the following:

- Leadership skills (ability to plan; determine vision and mission; develop strategic plan; and oversee implementation of that plan)
- Knowledge of accounting, administration, and grant-making procedures
- Knowledge-currency related to marine sciences, marine policy and resource management, coastal ecology, social science, and coastal demographic issues
- Knowledge and communications skills of extension specialists and communications professionals in order to serve constituencies

**Communicating with External Constituencies.** While the Consortium has always made it a priority to focus its process management around the needs of its constituencies, there are always opportunities for improvement, particularly in the Internet Information Age. The Consortium's staff continues to upgrade the agency's Web site ([www.scseagrant.org](http://www.scseagrant.org)) by enhancing its interactive features, making the site more accessible to people with disabilities, and keeping the information current. The Web site features information about coastal and marine issues for scientists, educators, students, business and industry, and the public (see section III.7.2).



Consortium communications staff are now infusing the use of social media in Consortium outreach to reach our diverse audiences in diverse ways.

**Communicating with Institutional Constituencies.** The Consortium is transitioning its research/outreach proposal submission and its review and project reporting processes from hard copy to electronic format. Submission of the 2012-14 Sea Grant Omnibus proposals was done entirely electronically, and project reporting to National Sea Grant since 2008 has also been handled electronically. The Consortium now submits all its federal grant proposals online through the federal **grants.gov** Web site portal.

Effective September 19, 2008, the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium engaged in a new way of reporting progress to the National Sea Grant College Program office. The Sea Grant network has developed a new PIER system. The goal of PIER is to streamline reporting procedures, increase the timeliness of reporting, and generate efficiencies.

The goal of the Consortium's communications program is to place information produced by research, education, and extension activities into the hands of those who manage and use South Carolina's coastal and marine resources. To facilitate that effort, a *S.C. Sea Grant Consortium Communication Support Guidelines* booklet is now in use. The guide advises Sea Grant-sponsored investigators, extension specialists, and others of the procedures and opportunities available for publication and dissemination of information derived from their work.

Furthermore, the Consortium has Institutional Liaisons to provide a direct administrative link between the Consortium and each of its eight member institutions. The Consortium's also has updated its external procedures handbook titled *A Faculty and Institutional Guide for Consortium Proposals and Projects*; it is available on the Consortium's Web site.

## **6.2. Key Work Processes and Relationship to Core Competencies**

The primary mechanisms the Consortium uses to incorporate improvements in effectiveness and efficiency factors are our institutional and external communication linkages. The Consortium Core Group meets monthly to review Consortium programs and activities and address needs related to product design and delivery. The Consortium utilizes its program advisory committees and convenes specialized program area advisory groups to solicit ideas and input that is used by the agency to improve its products and services. The National Sea Grant Site Visit review is also instrumental in identifying the Consortium's "best practices" and areas of excellence and offering concrete suggestions to the agency for improving performance, service, and product delivery.

The accountability requirements set forth in our legislative mandate, and guidance provided by our Board of Directors, the National Sea Grant Site Visit review process (see section III.1.5), and the Program Advisory Board (see section III.2.1), are instrumental in ensuring that agency management processes are used.

## **6.3. Incorporation of Efficiency/Effectiveness Factors into Design and Delivery**

As noted elsewhere in this report, the Consortium uses a continuous two-way information loop among and between all employees, including monthly staff meetings as a major vehicle, for





incorporating efficiency and effectiveness factors into its day-to-day operations. The Strategic and Implementation Plan accomplishes this goal (see section III.2) as it too is shared with the entire workforce. Duties with regard to implementing goals are clearly identified within the implementation plan by employee. Cost-saving measures are discussed in meetings as appropriate. One recent example is the switch the Consortium made to use Advanced Documents for purposes of shredding and recycling all Consortium paper. Advanced Documents does this service at a reduced cost to us.

With regard to “cycle time,” the agency establishes a defined calendar of milestones for soliciting, reviewing, and funding proposals submitted by Consortium members.

#### **6.4. Meeting Key Performance Requirements**

**Administrative and Financial Performance.** The principal investigators of all Consortium funded projects are responsible for all technical reporting and, in conjunction with their business office, all fiscal reporting to the Consortium. In turn, the Consortium is responsible for technical and fiscal reporting to its funding agencies. Consortium professional staff frequently visits with investigators on campus to discuss project progress and needs. Project investigators are required to submit formal requests for budget changes, time extensions, and changes in project scope to the Agency Head for approval, through the institution’s Office of Sponsored Programs, at least 60 days prior to the end of a grant period.

Start dates for Consortium-funded projects and programs vary throughout the year, but in all cases, the agency issues formal award announcements that are mailed to the investigator. Under separate notification, the respective institution’s business office is provided with two copies of the Consortium Award Agreement, which includes all performance and reporting requirements. The institutional representatives must read, agree to, and endorse the Award Agreement. The institution must then forward one signed original back to the Consortium for its records.

In addition to the Agreement, fiscal reporting forms that reflect the approved budgets are mailed to investigators and their respective institutional fiscal officers. The “Federal and Match Expenditure Report” is used to reflect expenditures and is sent quarterly to the Consortium’s Assistant Director by the institutional business office, with the appropriate endorsement.

The policy and procedures set forth in the DOC regulations (37 CFR 401), “Rights to Inventions made by Nonprofit Organizations and Small Business Firms Under Government Grants, Contracts, and Cooperative Agreements,” published in the Federal Register on March 18, 1987, apply to all grants and cooperative agreements made for which the purpose is experimental, developmental, or research work. The Consortium’s Assistant Director receives with the final expenditure report a completed “Final Invention Statement” if any patents were developed.

**Programmatic Performance.** There are three categories of project reports required by the Consortium:

1. *Progress Reports* are prepared by the Consortium staff 90 days prior to the end of a project year, that briefly summarize project progress for the current effort;
2. *Annual Reports* are prepared by all principal investigators; they summarize annual progress of a project which is proposed for continuation; and



3. *Final Reports* are prepared by principal investigators at the end of a project. These reports provide a detailed but concise summary of results of the entire project.

These reports are used to ensure that all projects are achieving their stated goals within the timeframes and budgets established for them. The Consortium may delay final reimbursements for those projects for which Project Reports are not received or deemed not acceptable by the Consortium; reimbursement is made once the deficiencies are addressed. During the reporting period the Consortium made further changes to its reporting requirements to encourage timelier reporting. One change – even if a project is granted an extension, the principal investigator must submit an annual report, followed by a final report at the end of the extension.

In addition, the Consortium is responsible for assembling a number of agency-wide reports on a regular basis. Included in these are the State Agency Activity Inventory, the State Accountability Report, the Clemson Faculty Activity System (FAS), the Clemson University Management Information System, Annual Progress Reports, Sea Grant Omnibus Program Plan, Program Area Fact Sheets, Strategic and Implementation Plan, the National Sea Grant Annual Progress Report, and the National Sea Grant Site Visit Review Briefing Book.

### **6.5. Evaluation and Improvement of Key Product and Services Processes**

Processes are typically shared with the Consortium's Board of Directors, and their insight is always a valuable tool for initiating refinements or improvements where necessary. On a day-to-day basis, the Core Group regularly evaluates and improves key product and service-related processes. We typically seek input from our various constituents as part of this process. We also rely upon the quadrennial National Sea Grant Program reviews for evaluation and recommendations for improvement. On-going review of the Consortium's Strategic and Implementation Plan by Consortium staff and the agency Program Advisory Board serves as a means to determine if our activities remain aligned with our strategic goals and mission.

### **6.6. Key Support Processes and Means for Improvement**

Our key support processes, each of which has been identified and defined earlier in this report, include (1) project management, (2) administration and management, (3) Consortium Management Information System, (4) Communications and Information Services, and (5) S.C. Sea Grant Extension Program. The primary means of improving and updating these processes is by providing opportunities for staff to attend training and educational sessions that allow them to stay current on emerging developments in their areas of responsibility. These opportunities include sessions offered by the South Carolina, the Federal government, state universities, other Sea Grant College Programs, and through private organizations that are relevant to the needs of the agency. In addition, the agency seeks greater efficiencies by undergoing continuous evaluation. These evaluations include updating our strategic and implementation plans, and reporting on the outcomes of the performance indicators and metrics identified therein. This includes engagement of partners to leverage resources and to achieve greater performance and efficiency.

### **6.7. Determination of Resources Needed**

To meet projected budget and financial obligations, the Consortium relies upon assiduous accounting and guidance from its current strategic and implementation plans. The accounting





component lets the organization know where it stands in terms of financials and budgets; and the strategic component provides a platform upon which prioritization decisions can be made in order to meet fiscal obligations.

## **CATEGORY 7 – BUSINESS RESULTS**

**Results Summary.** Table 7.1.A presents a summary of numerical management results for the Consortium during FY11-12, in comparison to FY03-04, FY04-05, FY05-06, FY06-07, FY07-08, FY08-09, FY09-10, and FY10-11, based on the measures that are described in section III.4.3. Selected achievements from this table are expanded upon later in this category.

### **7.1. Performance Levels for Mission Accomplishment and Process Effectiveness**

**The Consortium’s External Performance Assessment Review.** The Consortium undergoes an assessment of its performance every four years by the National Sea Grant College Program in accordance with the requirements of the National Sea Grant College Program Act of 1988 (PL105-160). On September 21-22, 2010 the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium was evaluated by an external National Sea Grant Site Visit Review Team, which was charged with reviewing and making recommendations for improvement on the Consortium’s program management and organization, stakeholder engagement, and collaborative network activities. The Team commended the Consortium for its effective management and organization; creativity; stakeholder engagement; collaborative networking; local, state, regional, and national leadership; ability to leverage resources and funding; and interactions with the private sector. In that light, the Site Visit Team report ([www.scseagrant.org/Content/?cid=461](http://www.scseagrant.org/Content/?cid=461)) had no recommendations to offer for program improvement.

As mentioned in our State Accountability report last year, the Team had many positive conclusions, including:

- “There are currently eight institutions in the Consortium... The Program’s inherent multi-institutional structure has created many opportunities and, given the effective leadership of the Program, significant efficiency and productivity.”
- “Site Visit participants noted that the structure and performance of the Consortium helped convince individual institutions that creating and facilitating partnerships would lead to more effective use of funds.”
- The Consortium, “through the use of its Program Advisory Board, gets excellent guidance on initiatives related to coastal and marine resource issues and opportunities.”
- The Consortium “blends science, outreach, and communication components well.”
- The Consortium’s “stakeholder engagement is broad, impressive, diverse, and multidimensional. The Consortium has been entrepreneurial and has used creative ‘out-of-the-box’ thinking. This has leveraged credibility and provided opportunities to match resources to needs.”
- The Team “was also impressed with the Consortium’s work with the private sector where, through education and creative partnering, private sector resources were brought to bear in areas with aligned public and private goals.”

**Biennial National Sea Grant Omnibus Program.** The Consortium receives its base federal funding support from the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program. The agency’s most recent Sea Grant Proposal solicitation and review process occurred in the spring and summer,



**Table 7.1.A. South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium**

**Agency Management Performance Measures – FY03-04 to FY11-12**

MEASURE	FY03-04	FY04-05	FY05-06	FY06-07	FY07-08	FY08-09	FY09-10	FY10-11	FY11-12
<b>Mission Accomplishment</b>									
National Sea Grant Performance Rating	Excellent	High Performance	High Performance	High Performance	High Performance	High Performance	High Performance	Highly Commended	Highly Commended
Communications Awards (#)	3	5	5	6	4	5	4	4	2
Res/Educ Proposals Submitted (#)	49	47	53	52	34	39	32	47	36
Res/Educ Proposals Funded (#)	32	28	31	34	28	27	23	38	26
University Faculty Supported (#)	ND	80	85	108	42	59	40	62	50
Grads/Undergrads Supported	ND	35	54	62	44	66	50	48	35
K-12 Teachers Trained	35	50	120	690	345	300	116	110	126
K-12 Students Reached	ND	ND	ND	ND	600	600	2,875	2,750	3,482
Number of Curricula Developed	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	11	9	7
<b>Customer Satisfaction</b>									
Extension Programs	ND	102	81	76	236	201	190	74	94
Participants - Extension Events	ND	1,500	2,000	>1,900	4,785	4,157	6,450	2,785	4,071
Pubs/Products - Extension	~25	30	22	18	57	71	76	26	10
Pubs/Products - Communications	35	32	45	41	35	28	20	26	28
Unsolicited Requests for Pubs	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	1,262	900	1,030	774
Publications Distributed	1,478	4,125	4,859	4,468	4,828	3,851	4,002	2,913	1,223
News Releases (#)	14	18	11	12	10	8	10	11	12
Placements from News Releases	131	130	142	128	210	195	220	155	176
Unsolicited Media Placements	91	95	39	37	45	40	20	20	26
Agency Web Site - Hits	843,900	1,328,515	1,607,461	1,883,119	2,374,584	2,667,257	2,645,939	2,049,117	1,127,467
Agency Web Site - Unique Visits	76,600	142,450	235,188	292,331	295,890	151,618	188,376	263,835	200,793
Agency Web Site - Downloads	ND	ND	ND	1,102,333	1,280,173	2,080,617	2,326,268	1,439,341	725,222
Volunteer Site Capts Beach Sweep	~75	~100	>100	116	110	115	110	100	110
Volunteers (#) Beach Sweep	~3,000	>2,500	>3,500	3,200	4,500	4,500	3,200	4,700	3,000
<b>Financial Performance</b>									
State Recurring Funding	\$ 440,505	\$ 354,164	\$ 545,748	\$ 452,308	\$ 615,836	\$ 444,756	\$ 426,800	\$ 360,134	\$ 332,223
Extramural Funding	~\$5,500,000	~\$6,009,000	~\$5,500,000	~\$5,280,000	~\$4,120,000	\$3,227,636	\$3,562,241	\$4,604,549	\$3,381,759
Return on (State) Investment	1,249%	1,696%	1,216%	967%	669%	726%	835%	1278%	1142%
Single Agency Audit	No Findings	No Findings	No Findings	No Findings	No Findings	No Audit	No Audit	No Audit	No Findings
<b>Human Resource Results</b>									
Agency Staff Retention/Rehiring	7 Vacancies	4 Vacancies	Fully Staffed	2 Vacancies	Fully Staffed	3 Vacancies	4 Vacancies	4 Vacancies	5 Vacancies
Staff Training Opportunities	ND	4	10	15	15	12	17	25	18
SG Extension Staffing level	NA	NA	NA	Fully Staffed	Fully Staffed	Fully Staffed	1 Vacancy	1 Vacancy	Fully Staffed



2011. As a result, the Consortium received \$1,281,670 in FY12-13 Sea Grant core funding to support 10 research and education projects, along with its program management and development activities, its Communications and Information Services program, and the S.C. Sea Grant Extension Program.

**National Sea Grant Research Competitions.** The National Sea Grant College program also issues nationwide calls for proposals on issues of larger-scale importance. Over the last ten years, the Consortium has submitted a total of 46 full proposals to the Sea Grant National Strategic Investment (NSI) competitions. Twenty-four proposals were funded; a 52% success rate (Table 7.1.B.). Proposals for FY11-12 were funded in the areas of Climate Adaptation, Community Climate Assistance, and Marine Education.

**Table 7.1.B.** National Competition Funding – Proposals Submitted vs. Funded

Name	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	09-10*	10-11	11-12	Totals
Marine Aquaculture		2/2				4/3	2/2	3/0		1/1		12/8
Invasive Species		2/0			2/0							4/0
Applied Technology		1/1		2/1								3/2
Marine Biotechnology			4/0									4/0
Fisheries Extension			1/1						1/1			2/2
Minority Serving Instit	1/1											1/1
Oyster Disease		4/1	1/0		1/0							6/1
Gulf Oyster Industry				1/1	3/2	3/2	2/0					9/5
Climate Extension							1/1			1/1		2/2
Climate Adaptation											1/1	1/1
Climate Mini-grant										1/1	1/1	1/1
Marine Education Init.											1/1	1/1
TOTAL	1/1	9/4	6/1	3/2	6/2	7/5	5/3	3/0	1/1	3/3	3/3	46/24

\*There were no NSI competitions during the reporting period FY08-09.

**Extramural Programs.** The Consortium continues to seek and receive funding from a number of non-state sources. Appendix 2 lists all major grants secured during the FY11-12 fiscal year.

**Administration.** During the reporting period, the Consortium administered research, education, and extension projects involving over 100 grant actions, continuing a trend of growth of this metric. This number does not include grant administration activity associated with ongoing research projects. It is important to point out that as the agency expands through increased extramural funding, the Consortium's administrative resources have been stretched thin while its level of activities and community involvement continue to grow. All grant award and interagency billing and accounting processes are processed within a two-week timeframe.

**Communications Awards and Recognition.** Each issue of the Consortium's *Coastal Heritage* quarterly magazine focuses public attention on a coastal theme selected in accordance with the Consortium's program areas and current events on a state or national level. The Consortium receives regular feedback, both written and oral, on the magazine. Among those who have noted the valuable contribution *Coastal Heritage* makes toward raising public awareness and understanding are civic/business groups, the news media, educators, and other agencies involved in managing natural resources.



Four issues of *Coastal Heritage*, the Consortium's premier publication, were produced. Major topics included disaster resilience, sea-level rise, Lowcountry's Jazz age, and offshore wind energy development. The magazine has won numerous awards in past years and, in FY11-12, the magazine received the following awards:

- Award of Excellence-Society for Technical Communication (STC) – Carolina Chapter
- APEX Award of Excellence in the Magazines and Journals category

**Student Fellowships.** The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium provides high level, competitive fellowship opportunities for graduate students enrolled in marine-related curricula in South Carolina's universities. Table 7.1.C. lists the South Carolina-based students that have secured these very competitive educational and professional development opportunities.

**Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship.** The National Sea Grant College Program sponsors the Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship Program to advance marine-related educational and career goals of participating students and to increase partnerships between universities and government. The fellowship provides a unique educational experience to students who have an interest in ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources in the national policy decisions affecting those resources. Each year, fellowships are awarded on a competitive basis at the national level. Selected Knauss Fellows are hosted by the legislative and executive branches of federal government. For FY12-13, the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium reviewed eight candidates; submitted five qualified graduate students for the national panel's consideration; and two were selected as finalists. The Consortium continues its success in this program and is consistently in the top 15% of the nationwide Sea Grant programs.

**NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship.** The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Management Fellowship provides on-the-job education and training opportunities for postgraduate students in coastal resource management policy and also provides specific technical assistance for state coastal resource management programs. The program matches highly qualified students with hosts around the United States in state coastal zone management (CZM) programs. For FY11-12, the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium received and submitted three applicants in a nationwide competition. None of the Consortium's candidates were selected to serve this year (of the five chosen nationwide).

**K-12 Education.** Consortium support was provided to many faculty, staff, and 35 students seeking their BS, MS, PhD and professional school degrees at our eight member institutions.

In addition, the Consortium's education and outreach program achieved the following results:

- The Consortium provided education programs to 3,482 K-12 students.
- Four editions of *Coastal Heritage Curriculum Connections* were published on the Consortium's Web site, which provide supplemental classroom resources for South Carolina K-12 students. The *Curriculum Connection* is written for both middle- and high-school students and is aligned with the S.C. state standards for the grade levels.
- Along with four partners, the Consortium worked with more than 1,300 students and 17 teachers from local schools on the second phase of a shoreline stabilization project, *From Seeds to Shoreline*. This program is offered at no cost to schools, aligns with state standards, and encourages student-driven science investigations.



**Table 7.1.C.** Placement of South Carolina graduate students in fellowship programs over the past 25 years.

<b>Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowships</b>			
<b>Initiation Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Degree</b>
1984	David Pyoas	CofC	M.A. Public Administration
1986	Stephanie Sanzone	USC	M.S. Marine Science
1989	Grant Cunningham	Clemson	Ph.D. Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Mgmt.
1990	Paul Scholz	USC	M.S. Marine Science
1990	Frances Eargle	USC	M.S. Biology
1991	Edward Cyr	USC	Ph.D. Marine Science
1992	Wendy Whitlock	Clemson	M.S. Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Mgmt.
1993	Erik Zobrist	USC	Ph.D. Biology
1993	Jenny Plummer	Clemson	M.A. City and Regional Plan.
1994	Ellen Hawes	CofC	M.A. Public Administration
1996	Lisa DiPinto	USC	Ph.D. Marine Science
1998	Mara Hogan	CofC/MUSC	M.S. Environmental Policy
1999	Elizabeth Day	USC	Ph.D. Marine Science
	Robyn Wingrove	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2000	Barbara Bach	USC	M.S. Earth and Environ. Resource
2001	Julianna Weir	USC	M.S. Marine Science
2002	Kathy Tedesco	USC	Ph.D. Geological Sciences
	Elizabeth Fairey	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2003	Jennifer Jefferies	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2004	Susannah Sheldon	CofC	M.S. Environmental Studies
	Rebecca Shuford	USC	Ph.D. Marine Biology
	Noel Turner	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2006	Kristine Hiltunen	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
	Liza Johnson	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2007	Martha McConnell	USC	Ph.D. Geological Sciences
	Kathleen Semon	USC	M.S. Earth & Environ.Res. Mgmt.
2008	Amanda McCarty	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
	Luis Leandro	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
	Courtney Arthur	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
	Jessica Berrio	CofC	M.S. Environmental Studies
	Emily McDonald	USC	M.S. Environmental Health
2009	Kolo Rathburn	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
	Michelle Johnston	USC	Ph.D. Environmental Health Scs.
	Lisa Vandiver	USC	Ph.D. Environmental Health Scs.
2010	Sierra Jones	USC	Ph.D. Biological Sciences
2011	Jennifer Bennett	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
	Anna Manyak	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2012	Leah Fisher	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
	Elizabeth Fly	USC	PhD. Biological Sciences
<b>Coastal Management Fellowships</b>			
<b>Initiation Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Degree</b>
1997	Doug Marcy	UNC-Wilmington	M.S. Geology
	Brian Voight	Clemson	M.A. City and Regional Planning
1998	Katherine Busse	Oregon State	M.S. Marine Resource Mgmt.
2001	Peter Slovinsky	USC	M.S. Geological Sciences
	Bonnie Willis	USC	M.S. Marine Science
	Kate Ardizone	Indiana University	M.A. Public Affairs
2002	Susan Fox	CofC	M.S. Environmental Studies





2004	Amy Filipowicz	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2005	Jacqueline Shapo	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2008	Gabrielle Lyons	USC	M.S. Geological Sciences
2009	Leigh Wood	Clemson University	M.S. City and Regional Plan.
2010	Kate Skaggs	CofC	M.S. Environmental Policy
	Kathy Johnson	Clemson University	M.S. City and Regional Plan.
2011	Sarah Latshaw	CofC	M.S. Environmental Studies

**Partners and Collaborating Organizations.** During 2011-12, the Consortium worked with numerous individuals representing over 100 federal, state and local agencies, county and municipal governments, K-12 schools, universities, businesses, and industry (see Appendix 1).

## 7.2. Performance Levels and Trends for Customer Satisfaction

**Publications and Products - FY2011-12.** The Consortium's extension and communications staff produced 54 publications and products in FY11-12, which informed our constituents about coastal issues and facilitated the transfer and exchange of information. From July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012, the Consortium's Communications and Information Services (CIS) program generated the following:

**Table 7.2.A.** Productivity of Consortium Communications efforts.

CIS Statistics	Number
SCSGC Publications Distributed	1,223
Publications Requested	774
Media Requests - Unsolicited	26
News Releases	12
Media Placements due to News Releases	176
Number of Web site hits (see Figure 7.2.A.)	1,127,467
Number of Web site unique visits	200,793
Number of Web site downloads	725,222
Number of PDF Downloads of Consortium publications from National Sea Grant Library Web site	5,104
Publications and Information Products	28

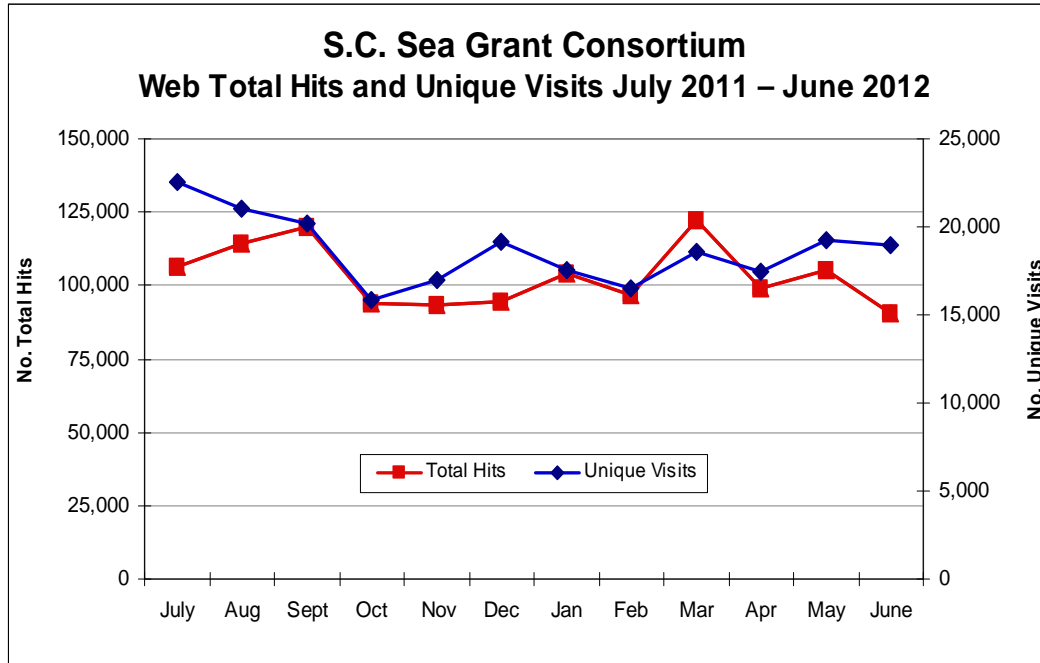
**S.C. Sea Grant Consortium Website.** The Consortium continues to enhance its Web site ([www.scseagrant.org](http://www.scseagrant.org)) by expanding its interactive features, making the site more accessible to people with disabilities, and keeping the information current. The site features an array of information about coastal and marine issues for researchers, educators, students, and the public. Compared to the last biennium, the Consortium Web site played a prominent and successful role in the Consortium's FY12-14 request for proposals, making it easier for researchers to do business with the agency. Consortium Web site usage over time can be found in Figure 7.2.A.

Total hits for FY11-12 were down to 1,127,467; and unique visits decreased to 200,793. A new indicator (downloads) was added in FY06-07 to identify proactive use of Consortium Web site information; during the current reporting period, 725,222 files were downloaded (see Figure 7.2.B). [It should be noted that, because a significant percentage of households in South Carolina still do not have Internet access, traditional means of communication are still extremely important for information delivery and continue to be utilized by the Consortium.]

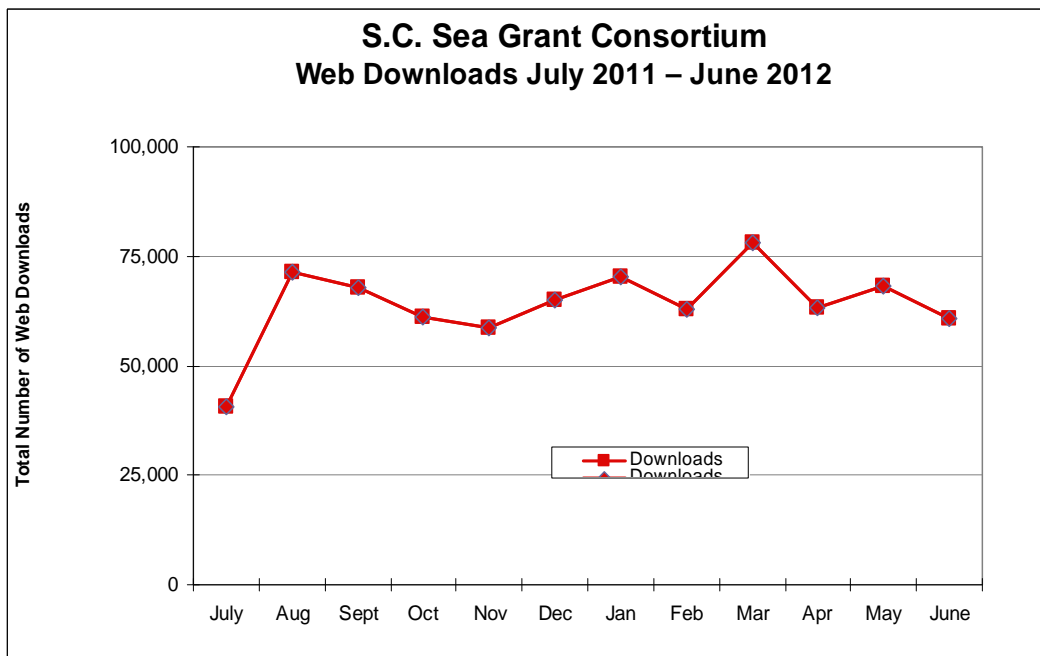




Consortium staff has taken a leadership role to accomplish this transition, and the Web developer is one of the founding board members of the S.C. Government Webmasters Association (SCGWA). This organization plans meetings and free technical training on a quarterly basis for all South Carolina state government web developers. Our Web Developer also built and continues to maintain the SCGWA web site.



**Figure 7.2.A.** Trend for monthly total hits and unique visits to the SCSGC Web site.  
Total Hits = a hit is a single request made to a web server for an object on a web site (e.g., image, page).  
Unique Visits = a visit to a web site represents one unique viewer who has visited the site.



**Figure 7.2.B.** Trend for download activity – another measure of a Web site's interest and utility to browsers.



**Beach Sweep/River Sweep.** The 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Beach Sweep/River Sweep was held September 17, 2011, and nearly 3,000 volunteers across South Carolina joined forces to rid beaches, marshes, and waterways of unsightly, and sometimes dangerous, debris. The litter cleanup, supported primarily with donations from the private sector, is organized by the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium and the S.C. Department of Natural Resources, and is held in conjunction with the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup.

Cleanup crews removed 20 tons of trash, recycling much of what was collected. On the coast, volunteers tackled over 130 sites - from North Myrtle Beach to Daufuskie Island - that were made safer, healthier, and more beautiful for all to enjoy. Volunteers for Beach Sweep/River Sweep represent a wide variety of organizations, from school children and Scouts to church groups, environmental organizations, state and federal agency employees, and the military.

Major sponsors of the 2011 Beach Sweep/River Sweep were Applied Technology and Management, BP Cooper River Plant, Charleston City Marina, Charleston Water System, Coastal Expeditions, Duke Energy Foundation, Mount Pleasant Waterworks, S.C. State Ports Authority, Walmart Market #34, and the Ocean Conservancy.

**Addressing Stakeholder Needs through Strategic Planning.** The agency's strategic plan is a process – it is dynamic – and therefore the Consortium's strategic planning for 2010-13 focused on the “changing face” of the South Carolina coast and the ever-increasing demands by the agency's constituencies for its products and services. During the last two reporting periods, and continuing into this period, the Consortium initiated efforts to improve the focus and responsiveness of its future programmatic activities. The Consortium's Core Group conducted an internal planning process to review its programmatic areas and update the entire Strategic Plan. Previous program area designations were evaluated and reorganized into a performance-based set of strategic goals. These goals reflect the Consortium's desire that it address the relevant and pressing coastal and marine resource needs of South Carolina.

The 2010-13 Strategic and Implementation Plan includes both an Administrative component and Programmatic component. It has also been “aligned” with the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program Strategic Plan. The Administrative component includes an emphasis on maintaining and enhancing a viable administrative, management, and financial system and encouraging an “environment of excellence” by supporting the development of leadership skills among staff. This includes focusing efforts to strengthen the Consortium's administrative process and eliminate weaknesses that are identified. It also ensures that the Consortium remains current regarding the technology being used in the State for administrative procedures (e.g., SCEIS). The Programmatic components focus on key issues on which the Consortium will direct its programs.

### **7.3. Performance Levels and Trends for Financial Performance**

**Consortium Funding Trends.** In FY11-12, the Consortium received some \$3,381,759 in non-state funding, representing approximately an \$846,943 decrease from FY10-11. The agency's total annual budget for FY11-12 was \$3,713,982, a 26% decrease compared with FY10-11.



While the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium has been very effective in securing non-state funding in support of its strategic program areas around which it organizes its research, education, and extension activities, we are beginning to see the effects of state budget reductions and a significant constriction of available federal funds for these activities. Unfortunately, the recent fiscal crisis around the country has impacted the Consortium's capacity to pursue these opportunities and significantly impacted the organizations from which such support was to be sought. Budget trends can be found in Table 7.3.A. (FY1990-2011) and Figure 7.3.A (FY1995-2011).

**Consortium Funding - Coming Year.** The Consortium's initial state appropriation (recurring funds) decreased from \$615,836 in FY07-08 to \$332,223 in FY11-12 due to the fiscal crisis and subsequent budget reductions, an overall decrease of some 46% over the last four years. However, the Consortium's budget for FY12-13 has been increased to \$444,486, a 28% restoration. The agency is now in the process of assembling its request for FY13-14 to be submitted to the Governor's office; our request will seek level funding.

**Table 7.3.A.** Consortium Budget Trends 1990-2012

Year	State <sup>1</sup>	Core Sea Grant	Other <sup>2</sup>	Total
1990-91	518,100	725,000	386,200	1,629,300
1991-92	492,100	705,000	497,000	1,694,100
1992-93	482,400	845,000	705,300	2,032,700
1993-94	490,900	845,000	1,123,400	2,459,300
1994-95	503,900	1,015,000	1,283,100	2,802,000
1995-96	487,400	1,015,000	2,033,000	3,535,400
1996-97	496,500	896,500 <sup>3</sup>	2,498,800	3,891,800
1997-98	528,300	1,169,000	2,654,500	4,351,800
1998-99	575,200	1,169,000	2,597,100	4,341,300
1999-00	591,500	1,169,000	3,252,400	5,012,900
2000-01	650,800	1,191,200	3,259,700	5,101,700
2001-02	524,638	1,254,000	4,072,798	5,851,436
2002-03	499,873	1,260,000	4,125,300	5,885,173
2003-04	440,505	1,260,000	4,326,481	6,026,986
2004-05	354,164	1,261,670	4,748,159	6,634,180
2005-06	452,308	1,261,670	4,279,311	5,993,289
2006-07	545,748	1,236,670	4,059,801	5,842,219



2007-08	615,836	1,231,670	2,946,099	4,793,605
2008-09	444,756	1,231,670	1,995,966	3,672,392
2009-10	405,460	1,231,670	2,389,723	4,026,823
2010-11	363,559	1,231,670	3,397,032	4,992,261
2011-12	332,223	1,231,670	2,150,089	3,783,982

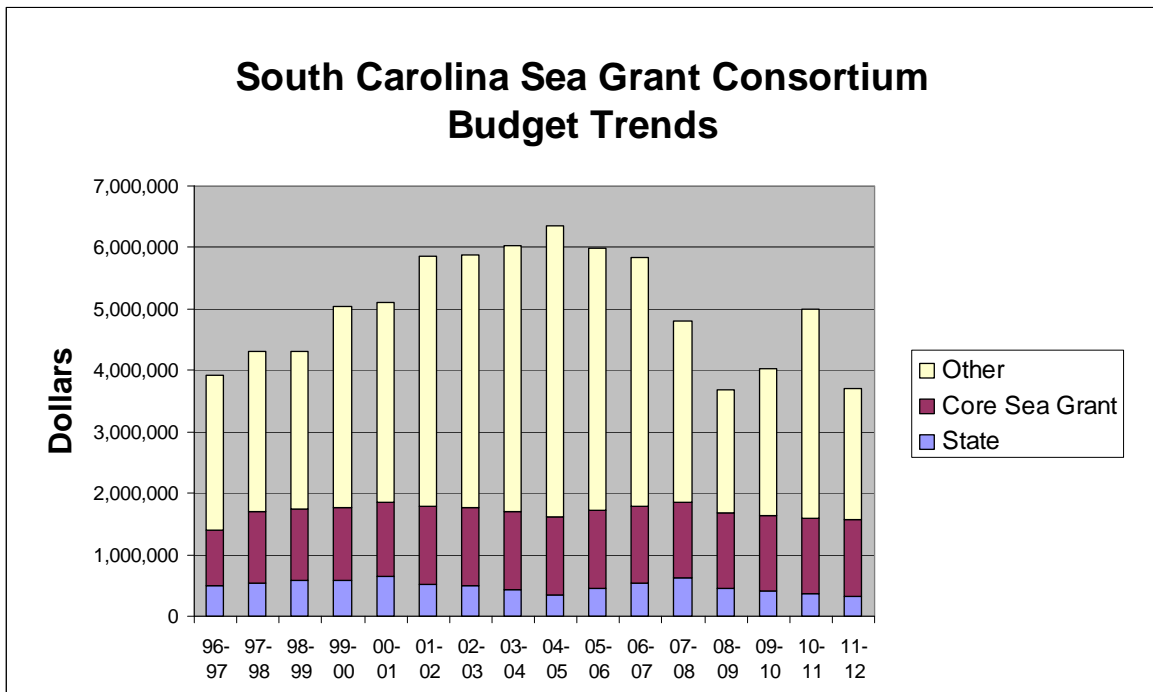
**Note:** Figures do not include institutional cost shares.

<sup>1</sup> State appropriations include B&CB-mandated reductions and B&CB adjustments such as BPI, FB, bonus, and annualizations.

<sup>2</sup> Other funds include support provided by local, state, federal (other than core Sea Grant) and private sources.

<sup>3</sup> Reduced Sea Grant core funding due to a six-month administrative budget as per National Office transition of grant start dates.

On the federal side, the House Appropriations Committee on Commerce, Justice, and Science has approved a 30% reduction to the FY12 budget for the National Sea Grant College Program (NSGCP). The Senate Appropriations Committee on Commerce, Justice, and Science has yet to act. Hill pundits are mixed as to the possibility of getting this budget bill through the Congress and on to the President for signature this year. If they do not, a Continuing Resolution will again be passed to cover the FY12 budget until next spring, with the possibility that an omnibus appropriations bill might be passed soon thereafter.



**Figure 7.3.A.** Year-to-year comparisons of Consortium funding by source of funds.

**Fiscal Analysis:** Fiscal responsibility is the keystone of any state agency because of its fiduciary responsibility to the state's citizens and to the taxpayers it serves. The Office of the State Auditor performed an FY10-11 audit in May 2012. The final audit report found no significant

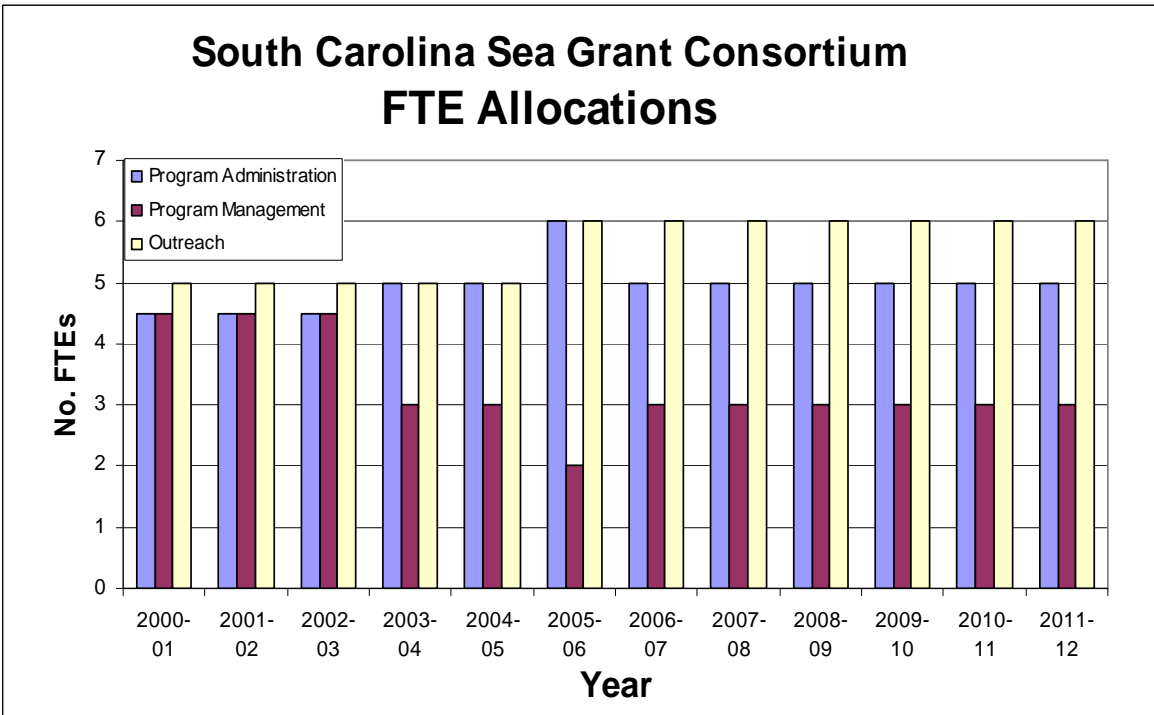


findings. The Consortium's Assistant Director is responsible for the financial administration of the agency on a day-to-day basis.

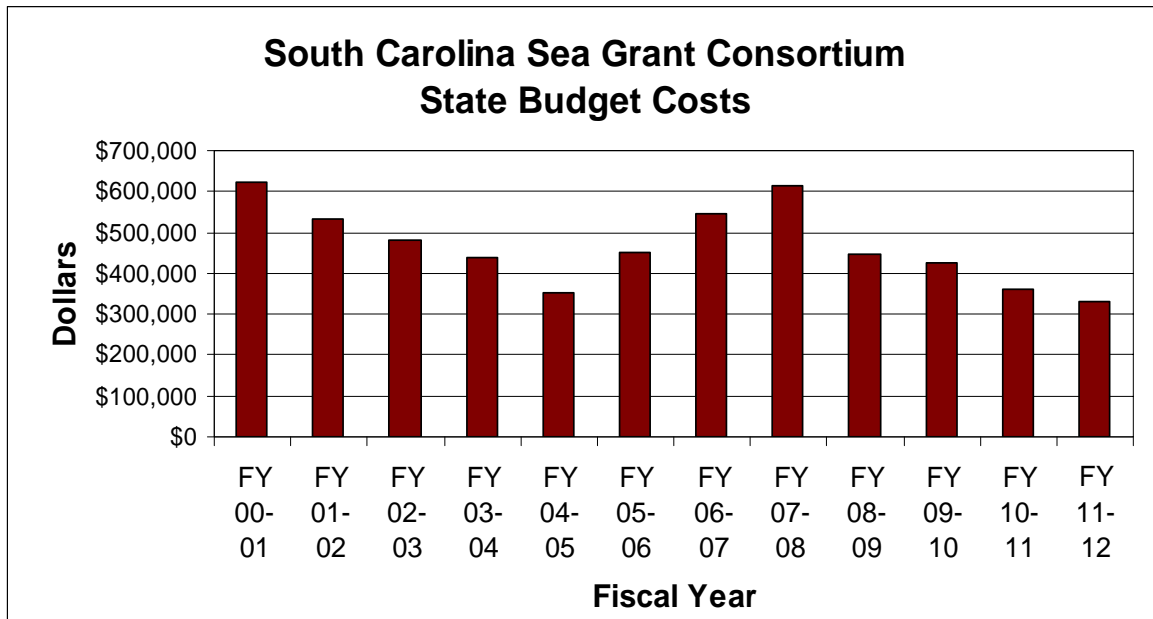
#### 7.4. Performance Levels and Trends for Workforce-Focused Results

The Consortium's fourteen full-time equivalents are evenly divided among the Consortium's Program Administration, Program Management, and Outreach activities (Figure 7.4.A). The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium currently has 7.14 state FTEs and 6.86 federal FTEs. The trend in number of FTEs essentially has remained constant over time (see Figure 7.4.A). Currently, five of the Consortium's 14 FTE positions are vacant due to state funding reductions incurred over the past four years. One of these positions will be refilled with the increase state recurring funds secured in the Consortium's FY12-13 budget.

While the Consortium's programmatic planning, implementation, and evaluation activities continued to increase, administration costs remained level over time until state fiscal difficulties and budget cuts affected the agency in the first half of the present decade. Since FY00-01, the Consortium has had to absorb severe budget reductions, thus, administration costs decreased by almost 50 percent through fiscal year 04-05. The Consortium received increases in FY05-06, FY06-07, and FY07-08 (Figure 7.4.B), but the volatility in state revenues, with significant budget reductions being absorbed over the past four years, make agency stability a significant challenge. In FY11-12, the Consortium's administrative costs were further cut (to unsustainable levels) due to the state's financial difficulties in the present budget climate.



**Figure 7.4.A.** SCSGC full-time equivalents (FTEs) by function. Consortium FTEs have remained fairly constant over a nine-year period.



**Figure 7.4.B.** Comparison of current period state administration budget to previous years.

### **7.5. Performance Levels and Trends for Workforce Efficiency**

As referenced earlier in the report, these types of questions are more appropriate for an organization making “widgets,” or large service organizations such as the Department of Motor Vehicles or the Department of Detention. The Consortium’s performance levels are primarily qualitative in nature, although we do track items such as grant actions handled per year and Web activity on a monthly basis. Some of these measures are found throughout Category 7.

### **7.6. Performance Levels and Trends – Regulatory/Legal Compliance**

The Consortium does not have any legal or regulatory mandates that require its attention. The agency, by definition, is non-regulatory and does not have resource management responsibilities.





**Appendix 1.** Selected organizations with which the Consortium has developed partnership, collaborative, and joint efforts or activities, or for which the Consortium has designed and delivered program activities and information.

Federal/National	State/Local NGOs
NOAA National Sea Grant College Program NOAA Climate Program Office NOAA National Severe Storms Laboratory NOAA National Ocean Service NOAA Hollings Marine Laboratory NOAA Center for Coastal Environmental Health and Biomolecular Research NOAA National Weather Service NOAA Fisheries NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration NOAA Office of Education U.S. Geological Survey U.S. National Park Service National Science Foundation U.S. Department of Agriculture U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention U.S. Environmental Protection Agency U.S. Army Corps of Engineers U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (Region IV) National Marine Educators Association National Non-Point Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) Network The Coastal Society National Federation of Regional Associations for Ocean Observing Consortium for Ocean Leadership Sea Grant Association	S.C. African-American Heritage Council S.C. Aquaculture Association S.C. Chapter of the American Planning Association S.C. Coastal Conservation League S.C. Downtown Development Association S.C. Economic Developers Association S.C. Marine Association S.C. Marine Educators Association S.C. Nature-Based Tourism Association S.C. Seafood Alliance S.C. Wildlife Federation Maritime Association of the Port of Charleston Georgia Department of Natural Resources Ashley Scenic River Advisory Council Beaufort County Open Land Trust Beaufort County Water Quality Task Force Keep South Carolina Beautiful Low Country Institute (Spring Island, S.C.) Spring Island Trust The Nature Conservancy Friends of the Rivers Michaux Conservancy Lowcountry Earthforce Center for Watershed Protection The Sustainability Institute Urban Land Institute-South Carolina United States Lifeguard Association Southern Shrimp Alliance Environmental Defense Fund Kitchen Table Climate Study Group (McClellanville)
Regional	Academic Institutions (regionally)
Governors' South Atlantic (Ocean) Alliance South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA) Southeast Center for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence (COSEE-SE) Carolinas Regional Coastal Ocean Observing System (RCOOS) Ocean Sciences Bowl, South Carolina/Georgia Region NOAA Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team NOAA in the Carolinas Southeast Regional Resiliency Initiative (SERRI) Community and Regional Resiliency Initiative	Consortium Member Institutions (8) Clemson University Restoration Institute University of Florida VIMS – College of William and Mary Dartmouth University SUNY-Albany University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill University of North Carolina – Wilmington East Carolina University Duke University Georgia Institute of Technology North Carolina State University Skidaway Institute of Oceanography University of Rhode Island



State and Local Government	Industry and Business
<p>South Carolina Governor's Office  South Carolina State Legislature  S.C. Department of Natural Resources  S.C. Department of Education  S.C. DHEC-OCRM  S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism  S.C. Department of Agriculture  S.C. Emergency Management Division  S.C. State Ports Authority  ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve Coastal Training Program  North Inlet-Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Coastal Training Program  City of Charleston  City of Folly Beach  City of Georgetown  City of Hardeeville  City of Isle of Palms  City of Myrtle Beach  City of North Myrtle Beach  Town of Sullivan's Island  Town of Seabrook Island  Town of Edisto  Town of Hilton Head Island  Town of Kiawah Island  Town of Port Royal  Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments  South Carolina Aquarium  Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission  S.C. Government Webmasters Association</p>	<p>S.C. Chamber of Commerce  Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce  Applied Phytogenetics, Inc.  Deweese Island Development  Institute of Business and Home Safety (IBHS)  Noisette Company  Santee Cooper  Southland Fisheries Corporation  Swimming Rock Fish &amp; Shrimp Farm  Design Works  Lack's Beach Lifeguards  Midway Fire Department  Geodynamics, Inc.  S.C. Seafood Alliance  S.C. Shrimpers Association  Applied Technology &amp; Management  BP Cooper River Plant  Ben &amp; Jerry's of Charleston  Wild American Shrimp, Inc.  Southeast Biodiesel, Inc.  Charleston City Marina  Charleston Water System  Coastal Expeditions  Duke Energy Foundation  HDR Engineering  Magnolia Plantation and Gardens  Middleton Place  Mount Pleasant Waterworks  Osprey Marina  Piggly Wiggly Carolina Co.  Walmart Market 123</p>
International	Other Organizations
<p>International Conference on Shellfish Restoration  Aquatic Plant Management Society</p>	<p>Hilton Head Sportfishing Club  Georgia Aquarium  North Carolina Aquarium  Federal Alliance for Safe Homes  Fernbank Science Center  Kiawah Island Community Association  Edisto Beach Community  Waccamaw Watershed Academy  Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium  Ashley-Cooper Stormwater Education Consortium  S.C. Coastal Information Network  S.C. Task Group on Harmful Algae  Ocean Conservancy</p>



**Appendix 2.** The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium competed for and secured the following coastal and marine research, education, and extension grants from non-state sources during FY11-12. The programs that are italicized represent new program starts during the reporting year.

#### Program Management

- “S.C. Sea Grant College Core Program” – NOAA/OAR National Sea Grant College Program – \$1,131,670 – February 1, 2011 to January 31, 2012 (continuing).
- “S.C. Sea Grant College Program - Merit Funding” – NOAA/OAR National Sea Grant College Program – \$95,000 – February 1, 2011 to January 31, 2012 (Year 2 of 2).

#### The Coastal and Ocean Landscape

- “Utilizing HABISS to Document, Analyze, and Interpret the Impacts of Harmful Algal Blooms and their Associated Marine Toxins on Ecosystems and Humans in South Carolina” – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – \$140,000 – September 29, 2011 to September 28, 2012 (Year 4 of 5).
- “Providing Ocean and Human Health Research, Education, and Training to Appropriate Audiences – a HML-SCSGC MOA Initiative” – NOAA/NOS Hollings Marine Laboratory – \$80,393 – August 1, 2011 to July 31, 2012 (Year 2 of 5).
- “*Enhancing Communications and Coordinating Outreach Activities throughout the IOOS Community: The NFRA Contribution*” – NOAA/NOS Coastal Services Center – \$125,000 – June 1, 2011 to May 31, 2012 (Year 1 of 2).
- “*Governors’ South Atlantic Alliance: Building a Regional Ocean Partnership Framework for the Coastal Ocean of the Southeastern United States – Phase I*” – NOAA/NOS Coastal Services Center - \$278,000 – January 1, 2012 to June 30, 2014 (Year 1 of 1).
- “*Designing a Multi-state and Regional Framework for CMSP and Decision-making: A Governors’ South Atlantic Alliance Initiative – Phase I*” - NOAA/NOS Coastal Services Center - \$784,431 – January 1, 2012 to June 30, 2014 (Year 1 of 1).

#### Sustainable Coastal Development and Economy

- “Addressing the Challenges of Coastal Growth in South Carolina: A S.C. Sea Grant Consortium Initiative” – NOAA/OAR National Sea Grant College Program – \$50,000 – February 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012 (continuing).
- “Determining the Role of Estuarine Swashes on Water Quality Impairment along the Grand Strand of SC: Impacts of Land Use and Stormwater Runoff” – NOAA/NOS/National Estuarine Research Reserve Program, through UNH and the NI/WB NERR - \$9,989 – September 15, 2011 to September 14, 2011 (Year 2 of 3).
- “Pesticides Decision-making Tool and Feasible Alternatives for Beaufort, Jasper, and Hampton Counties, SC” – The Lowcountry Institute – \$30,000 – August 15, 2011 to August 14, 2012 (Year 2 of 2).



- “Gray Triggerfish, *Balistes capriscus*, *Life History in the South Atlantic Bight*” – NOAA/OAR (through the University of South Carolina) - \$14,900 – January 1, 2012 to June 30, 2012 (Year 1 of 2).

#### Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture

- “The S.C. Sea Grant Aquaculture Extension Enhancement Program” – NOAA/OAR National Sea Grant College Program – \$80,715 – October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012 (Year 2 of 3).
- “2010 Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers and Fishermen” – U.S. Department of Agriculture-CSREES (through the University of Minnesota) – \$45,417 – September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2012 (Year 2 of 2).
- “*Lionfish in the South Atlantic and Caribbean: Integrated Regional research and Extension to Support Effective Management of an Invasive Marine Species*” - NOAA/OAR National Sea Grant College Program (through the Florida Sea Grant College Program) - \$3,540 – May 1, 2012 to April 30, 2013 (Year 1 of 3).

#### Hazard Resilience in Coastal Communities

- “The Carolinas Coastal Climate Outreach Initiative” – NOAA/OAR National Sea Grant College Program – National Strategic Investment Program – \$96,667 – July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012 (Year 2 of 2).
- “*Using Participatory Scenario Building to Encourage Climate-Resilient Zoning in the Coastal Carolinas*” – NOAA/OAR National Sea Grant College Program – Sea Grant Climate Adaptation 2011 – \$49,286 – February 1, 2012 to January 31, 2014 (Year 1 of 2).
- “Integrating Climate Vulnerability and Working Waterfront Preservation” - NOAA/OAR National Sea Grant College Program – Sea Grant CACBI – \$29,665 – May 1, 2012 to April 30, 2013 (Year 1 of 2).

#### Scientific Literacy and Workforce Development

- “Southeastern Center for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence (COSEE-SE): A Systematic Approach to Forming Ocean Science Education Partnerships – Phase III” – National Science Foundation – \$249,998 – September 1, 2011 to August 31, 2012 (Year 2 of 3).
- “Support for Beach Sweep/River Sweep 2011 Activities” – Private Cash Donations – ~\$20,000 – July 2011 to September 2011 (continuing).
- “*Sea Grant Knauss Fellowships (2)*” – NOAA/OAR National Sea Grant College Program – \$98,000 – March 1, 2011 to February 28, 2012 (continuing).
- “*Enhancing Capabilities and Programs within the South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium’s Marine Education Program*” – NOAA/OAR National Sea Grant College Program – \$54,740 – May 1, 2012 to April 30, 2013 (Year 1 of 2).